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**SOME SOUTH AFRICAN  
POLITICIANS**



# SOME SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICIANS

BY

L. E. NEAME

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WITH 16 DRAWINGS

*By* "QUIP"

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE.

The character sketch of General Hertzog appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* (London) of June 1928, and some of the other sketches were published in the *Johannesburg Star*, and the *Cape Argus*, Cape Town, but they have been expanded and revised. They are reprinted by the courtesy of the proprietors of the three publications.

The opinions expressed are purely personal, and do not necessarily represent the views of any political party or newspaper in South Africa.

L. E. N.

*January, 1929.*

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# CONTENTS.

## PART I.

### CABINET MINISTERS.

	PAGE
GENERAL THE HON. J. B. M. HERTZOG, PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF NATIVE AFFAIRS 1911 . . . . .	1
THE HON. T. J. ROOS, K.C., MINISTER OF JUSTICE 1912 . . . . .	13
THE HON. DR. D. F. MALAN, MINISTER OF INTERIOR, PUBLIC HEALTH AND EDUCATION 1913 . . . . .	21
COL. THE HON. F. H. P. CRESWELL, MINISTER OF DEFENCE 1914 . . . . .	29
THE HON. N. C. HAVENGA, MINISTER OF FINANCE 1915 . . . . .	37
THE HON. F. W. BEYERS, K.C., MINISTER OF MINES 1916 . . . . .	43
THE HON. C. W. MALAN, MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS 1917 . . . . .	49
THE HON. P. G. W. GROBLER, MINISTER OF LANDS . . . . .	55
GENERAL THE HON. J. C. G. KEMP, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE . . . . .	61
THE HON. T. BOYDELL, MINISTER OF LABOUR . . . . .	67
THE HON. H. W. SAMPSON, MINISTER OF POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS AND PUBLIC WORKS 1918 . . . . .	73

## PART II.

### EX-CABINET MINISTERS.

	PAGE
GENERAL THE RT. HON. J. C. SMUTS, P.C. 1870 . . . . .	77
THE RT. HON. SIR THOMAS SMARTT, P.C. 1878 . . . . .	87
THE RT. HON. F. S. MALAN, P.C. 1879 . . . . .	93
THE HON. J. W. JAGGER 1880 . . . . .	99
THE HON. PATRICK DUNCAN, K.C. 1881 . . . . .	107
THE HON. N. J. DE WET, K.C. 1882 . . . . .	113
THE HON. H. BURTON, K.C. 1883 . . . . .	117
THE HON. SIR THOMAS WATT, K.C.M.G. 1884 . . . . .	123
COLONEL THE HON. DENEYS REITZ . . . . .	129
THE HON. W. B. MADELEY 1872 . . . . .	135

# CONTENTS—Continued.

## PART III.

### M.L.A.'S AND EX-M.L.A.'S.

	PAGE
THE HON. E. G. JANSEN ("MR. SPEAKER")	139
SIR ERNEST OPPENHEIMER, KT.	143
THE HON. C. J. KRIGE	149
COL. SIR DAVID HARRIS K.C.M.G.	155
SIR DRUMMOND CHAPLIN K.C.M.G.	159
SIR ABE BAILEY, BT.	165
MR. LESLIE BLACKWELL, K.C.	169
MR. R. STUTTAFOED	175
MR. MORRIS ALEXANDER, K.C.	179
MR. J. S. MARWICK	183
MR. A. G. BARLOW	189

*GENERAL THE HON.  
J. B. M. HERTZOG.*



## PART I.

### CABINET MINISTERS.

#### General The Hon. J. B. M. HERTZOG.

"General Botha Resigns" shrieked the newspaper placards all over South Africa one sultry day in mid-December 1912. A somewhat bored public paused in an engrossing discussion of the prospects of the Springbok football team in England to discover that the first Government of the Union had collapsed after only thirty months of office.

It was thoughtless of these politicians to interrupt sport and the preparations for Christmas, but fortunately the crisis lasted only a few days. The Prime Minister had resigned, it seemed, merely to eject from the Cabinet one James Barry Munnik Hertzog, Minister of Justice and Native Affairs, who had most annoyingly declined to leave the Government he had disturbed. The ultimate eviction was rapid. The Governor-General, recalled from a tour formally to bury the first Union Ministry, promptly invited Botha to form a second, which he did with equal expedition, omitting the obnoxious J. B. M. Hertzog. The pro-English papers applauded the firmness of Botha, which they held had greatly strengthened a shaky and divided Cabinet. The towns were satisfied. What the backveld thought nobody cared. The whole thing was over before Christmas. The holiday weather was the most brilliant for years, the Springboks beat Wales, and the usual war somewhere in Eastern Europe was plainly on its last legs. So nothing had happened. All the sensible men agreed on that.

But it was an occasion very much resembling one which Lord Melbourne described: "All the sensible men were on one side and all the d——d fools on the other. And, egad, Sir, the d——d fools were right."

For everything had happened. The Hour had produced the Man. In the space of less than twelve years the evicted Minister gave his name to a new political faith, defeated his enemies, and became himself Prime Minister of the Union. There are few stories in politics more dramatic than that of the almost unknown man who rose to rule South Africa and incidentally changed the complexion of the British Empire.

Before 1912 Hertzog had been occasionally notorious rather than a notable figure in South African life. Born on April 3rd, 1866, under the British flag, in the Wellington district of the Cape, educated at Stellenbosch and in Holland, he was the fifth son of Johannes Albertus Munnik Hertzog who migrated to Kimberley in the early days and established a butchery and bakery, but in 1880 settled at Jagersfontein in the Orange Free State. "Young Hertzog," as ex-President Reitz called him, knew in his youth little of the republics with which he subsequently became associated. When the studious lad returned from Europe he joined the rush to the North and became an advocate in Pretoria. At the age of 29 he was made a Judge of the Free State High Court. The closing years of the nineteenth century saw him happy with his books and his garden, and apparently destined for an uneventful legal life at Bloemfontein.

The Anglo-Boer War tore him from these peaceful surroundings. He entered it as a legal adviser and ended it as a General with a reputation for rapid marches and for maintaining discipline. His raid into the north-western area of the Cape at the head of a thousand horsemen was one of the achievements that revived the war

after the Boer capitals had been taken. After Vereeniging he set himself to the task of winning at the polls the war lost on the battlefield, and he was the main driving force behind the Unie, the political party of the Dutch in the Free State. He could have been the Premier of the Orange Free State when Responsible Government was granted in 1907, but chose to serve as Attorney-General and Minister of Education under Abraham Fischer. These were days of racial conciliation and co-operation, when the flag issue was said to be settled for ever, and Botha and Smuts were preaching their "one stream" policy. Politicians treated their foes as though they might soon be their friends, and the first soft cooings of Union reached the attentive ear.

But Hertzog fell out of step. In the years of raid and war the ex-bookworm of Bloemfontein had evolved a fixed idea. There was no sudden conversion, nor does he seem to have drawn his inspiration from without. It was as though he too had the message: "Let the counsel of thine own heart stand . . . . For a man's mind is sometimes wont to tell him more than seven watchmen that sit above in a high tower."

Gradually there emerged the faith of Hertzogism. The grain of mustard seed was sown in the form of an Education Act in the Free State, which made bilingualism obligatory on all children and compelled English children to learn some of their school subjects through the medium of Dutch. A loud cry went up from English South Africa, and it rose to a shriek when Hertzog in one of his fits of angry obstinacy sacked three English school inspectors who applied his law to the letter and incidentally made it ridiculous. All the sensible people denounced the Free State Minister as a racial fanatic, and as they owned all the newspapers the noise was deafening. But behind the din there was the rustle of the first faint stirring of re-awakened Afrikanerdom.



In 1910 the good ship Union was launched down a slipway well greased by organised propaganda. Hertzog had helped with the ship-building and secured the laying down of the principle of language equality. The Convention spirit perfumed the air, and the future secessionist and champion of Republican independence took his little son to see the historic document signed.

Dreams fade quickly in South Africa. Before many months of the Union the first Prime Minister, easy-going Botha, was complaining to Lord Gladstone: "I object strongly to Ministers going about with resignations in their pockets and using them as a means of enforcing their views."

He had taken Hertzog into his Cabinet as Minister of Justice, after trying in vain to side-track him with an Appeal Court Judgeship. Botha's premonition was right. When Rosebery entered the last Gladstone Government Harcourt said to him: "Without you the Government would have been ridiculous; with you, it is only impossible." Botha had saddled himself with a man with all Rosebery's capacity for objection and with ten times his determination and strength of will.

Gradually there crystallized within Hertzog's mind the conviction that he was the new Moses destined to take his people out of the house of bondage. True, there were other leaders of his own race who denied that there was the spirit of Pharaoh in the new South Africa, and who insisted that by co-operation there could be built a pleasant dwelling-place for all. Hertzog perceived them to be false prophets. His was a narrower faith. He spoke of and to The People. He meant Our People. Botha, who had the support of British Natalian and British Labour votes, strove to damp down racial feeling. "The ties with the Mother Country must be strengthened," he said. At the Imperial Conference of 1911 he pleased London with his friendliness and his

court dress. He toyed with the idea of state-aided immigration and a contribution to the Navy. His may have been the wider-visioned statesmanship; it was not astute South African politics less than ten years after the Peace of Vereeniging was signed. It took fifty years to dull the edge of anti-Britishism in the victorious United States; to expect the Dutch to be pro-British eight years after a lost war was to strain human nature too far.

Hertzog was temperamentally antagonistic to Botha-ism. He marched against it in the spirit of a Crusader. He called state-aided immigration a crime, and a naval contribution a folly. Imperialism he said was "only important to him when it was useful to South Africa." Prominent English South Africans became in his eyes "foreign adventurers" and "cosmopolitan capitalists." Thus the new Government spoke with two voices. An astonished public became restless. Colonel Leuchars, a Natal member of the Cabinet, resigned "because he could not endure the anti-Imperial and anti-British sentiments and speeches of General Hertzog." Despite a personal visit by Botha, the Albany by-election was lost to the Government. The split in the Cabinet became gross and palpable; but Hertzog declined to resign on the ground that he had said nothing offensive to Botha's real sentiments. Explanations were attempted. The agile Smuts drafted a letter which Hertzog declined to sign. At last, as Hertzog refused to go, the entire Government went. In the new one he was missing.

Hertzog marched out in the wilderness—alone. Even Abraham Fischer, his old Free State chief and now a Union Minister, decided not to accompany him. His position seemed hopeless. He had sacrificed his portfolio and his political future. The entire South African Party organisation was against him—and Rosebery once wrote that the party machine "however futile in other directions is now so

developed that no individual, however gifted, can fight against it." The party funds were not his. Practically the whole newspaper press denounced him as a dangerous fanatic. Five Free State members only in a House of 121 were revealed on his side. Mahomed at the Flight was not in a worse position than Hertzog in 1912.

But Hertzog also was a zealot with a fixed idea. Not for nothing did a follower acclaim him as "the man with a backbone of steel." He too, persisted. And many began to listen. He spoke to "a people scattered and peeled . . . a nation meted out and trodden under foot." As Disraeli's gibes were balm to the disillusioned Peelite landowners, and F. E. Smith's contemptuous invective a delight to the broken ranks of English Conservatism, so Hertzog's recitals of racial rights and wrongs became a beacon light to a large section of the Boer population. His defects became virtues; his difficulties the stepping stones to triumph. The more racial he waxed, the more the race stirred. The more the English papers showered abuse upon him, the more the Dutch turned to defend him. Blood is thicker than water. The spare lithe figure, with the deepset black eyes, the high shoulders and the square jaw, became a hero on the veld. The rambling, impassioned speeches, full of repetition and hair-splitting, yet containing a kind of slow burning fire, sank into the hearts of a long-memoried and politically-minded people. Families travelled a hundred miles on slow moving ox-wagons to hear him, and the women cried and became his fiercest disciples. He was not long alone in the cave of Adullam. "Everyone that was discontented gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them."

Then black clouds gathered over South Africa and in the gloom the small figure of the Apostle of Afrikanerdom was scarcely visible. Industrial war broke out in the North, and Imperial troops fought a battle in the centre of Johannes-

burg. The settlement lasted only a few months and then clattering burgher commandoes and field guns overawed the strikers. Nine leaders were summarily deported, and the dispute made its way into one of the stormiest sessions of the Union Parliament.

Close upon the heels of industrial warfare came Armageddon. The world flew to arms, and nations were locked in a death struggle. In South Africa there was a war within a war. Old hopes, prejudices, hatreds, ambitions, raised their heads, and the Rebellion deepened the criss-cross of racial and political divisions.

In the uprising of his people in the "armed protest," Hertzog maintained a silence for which he was bitterly attacked. His attitude was that of Chief Justice de Villiers when asked to send a message to the Dutch "rebels" in the Cape in the Boer War: "If I were to address an appeal to them, I should have to admit that there had been faults on both sides." In long journeyings into the veld he tried to persuade Beyers and de Wet to lay down their arms. But, like ex-President Steyn, he would make no public utterance.

While kingdoms and nations split, the outer world forgot the troubles of South Africa. But in the shadows that covered the sub-continent the keen observer caught occasional glimpses of Hertzogism, and there could be no doubt about its growth. The final split had come in the closing weeks of 1913. The congress of the Dutch Ministerial Party at Capetown failed to end the schism, and Hertzog and his supporters rose in silence and left the hall. At the door General de Wet, the old Boer War hero, turned for a moment and waved his hand and cried "Adieu."

Thence onward Hertzog organised his supporters in the National Party in opposition to the South African Party led by Botha and Smuts. The Boer people were divided. Father grew bitter against son and brother quarrelled with brother ;

but every election showed that the Ministerial Dutch were stealing away to the ranks of the Hertzogites. Through the bitterness of the Rebellion and its aftermath, and the anger aroused by the demand for secession, and the excitement of a deputation to Europe to demand the re-establishment of the old Republics, the new leader pursued his course. So high did feeling run that in April 1918 he was assaulted in the precincts of Parliament and was rescued by the Hon. Hugh Wyndham and others. But he dismissed the incident as "a trumpety affair," and was equally unmoved when his visit to Johannesburg in the following year at the head of a commando led to rioting in the streets and window-breaking and motor-car-burning. He went grimly on his way. He had the faith of the fanatic, and the strong will of a Cromwell.

Time, too, was on his side. His creed was twofold, and the tendencies of the period strengthened both sides of it. It was the hour of Nationalism and small nations; and his racial appeal drew the Dutch to him and away from his opponents, who were compelled to rely more and more upon British votes, which in turn tended to antagonise the remnant of the Dutch. Also his faith was narrowly South African, and it satisfied the growing sentiment of Nationalism in South Africa and also the marked dislike of oversea interference which has characterised its people from the days when the Dutch settlers at the Cape quarrelled with their own Dutch rulers abroad.

Economic and financial depression drove thousands of people to the Hertzog side and finally broke the Smuts Government—Botha had died in 1919 worn out by disappointment and worries. The Hertzogite Five in the Parliament of 1912 had become 27 in 1915. In 1921 they were 47. In June 1924 they were 63, and by a working alliance with Labour gained a majority in Parliament for the Pact. Hertzog, now a man of 58, became Prime Minister. The

impossible of 1912 was the fact of 1924. Thus twelve years after Hertzog was ejected from the First Ministry of the Union he himself formed the Sixth. At last he had, as Disraeli said, "climbed to the top of the greasy pole." A notable journey for a man not a great speaker, not really a party politician by temperament or ambition, and not a leader who finds pleasure in power.

Henry Labouchere's advice to Lord Randolph Churchill at the time of his resignation was: "Sacrifice everything to becoming a fetish; then, and only then, can you do as you like." Hertzog sacrificed position, friends, colleagues, and as far as one could see, his whole career in 1912. He became a fetish to the Dutch. He has done as he liked ever since.

As a politician he owes much of his success to his limitations. He neither claims nor desires to be a world statesman. One cannot even say with certainty that his crusade was necessary. The point South Africa has reached to-day could have been attained without the years of blood and tears. But his vision was not wide enough to perceive such a possibility. He saw very clearly the claims of his own people, and, in order to strengthen and entrench them, the need for an independent and self-governing country. This dual objective has always been his fixed idea, and personally he has departed very little from it. He was not from the first enamoured of the secessionist republican propaganda or the demand for the re-establishment of the old Boer Republics, but was thrust into temporary acquiescence by less level-headed colleagues.

He still preaches his early faith. If he says less about independence, it is because he holds it has been achieved. If he does not now advocate secession from the Empire, it is because he believes that the old Empire he disliked has seceded from South Africa. He has the tenacity of purpose which one would expect in a man who used to make Fred-

erick the Great of Prussia his hero, and the sometimes self-deceiving mind which is not unusual in an ardent admirer of William Ewart Gladstone. This curious combination becomes visible sometimes in an obstinacy which nothing can move, but for which the reason is sometimes lost in a long and obscure speech. Some of Hertzog's utterances on republicanism bore a close resemblance to Gladstone's first Home Rule pronouncement in the Commons, which left his hearers unable to decide whether he favoured Home Rule or not. Yet in the eyes of his followers his achievements have been wonderful indeed. At the Imperial Conference of 1926 he secured for the Dominions the definite recognition of independent status. He has given South Africa its own national flag, put an end to British titles being offered to South Africans, and asserted in season and out of season South Africa's right to do exactly as it pleases even though the heavens fall.

The narrowness which made Hertzogism a successful policy within South Africa tends to make it a failure without. The Union has retired within its shell like a tortoise. The racial side of Hertzogism has frightened Rhodesia away, perhaps for ever. Even the protected native territories on the borders of the Union would protest against inclusion in it. Thus the vision of a great United States of South Africa has faded since Hertzogism triumphed. It is a faith which arouses no enthusiasm beyond the borders of the Union. A Hertzogite looks so fixedly at the wood that he cannot see the trees. He is so anxious that South African independence should be admitted, that he will reject advantages and aids of real national value merely because their acceptance might give the impression of limiting freedom. This tendency to national isolation in a thinly peopled and remote country may ultimately be the cause of serious weakness.

Hertzog has said some hard things about Great Britain, yet he is not really anti-British. He has a fine appreciation of English literature, and he and his children speak English perfectly. He is only anti-British to the extent that Britain has over-ruled, or might over-rule, or weaken, South-Africanism. He is, and always has been, anti-Imperial. He was, and is, "anti" outside control or interference. His hostility would be equally directed against any other country which he imagined might wish to interfere with Africa's destiny. His quarrel with some of the British in South Africa is not that they are British, but that they do not place South Africa first and Britain second. He is so intensely pro-South African that there are times when he seems to be anti every other country, but in many things he has a distinct admiration for England. What irritates him is any suggestion of overlordship, over-ruling, or racial superiority. With the individual Englishman he gets on famously.

One of his strongest British opponents once said, "General Hertzog is one of the most charming personalities a man could meet." Upon that point everyone agrees. Widely read and cultured, courteous, gentle in manner and fond of simplicity, he makes friends everywhere. He is transparently honest, and his bitterest foe would trust his word. Neither ambitious nor avaricious, he prefers the quiet pleasures of life, and is always happiest with his books or in his garden. No social ambitions distract him. He, like President Harding of America, is "just folks."

He is a specialist on the black-letter law books of Holland, and is a great student of philosophy and metaphysics. But his is a purely legal mind, and it works slowly and rather in a groove. The abstract proposition is everything with him. He handles an issue like a student in a library, and the case he puts up is apt to be academic and theoretical rather than practical. In everyday affairs he does not make sufficient



allowance for the prejudices and inconsistencies of human nature. What is right in theory appears to him always to be feasible in practice.

He strives to see and to be absolutely fair to those who differ from him, and the very care he takes in trying to put their point of view and answer it makes both his speeches and his writings long and involved. Sometimes it is difficult to follow his reasoning, but when he arrives at a conclusion he stands to it and all its logical consequences with complete fearlessness and an unshakable faith. Slow to anger, when moved he is capable of passionate feeling, and then it is that he goes further than he meant to do. Upon those rare occasions no one is more sorry at an injustice done. He interferes as little as possible with his Cabinet colleagues, but he has the moral courage to make a decision alone, and when he insists all opposition dies away.

With his own party and people his strength lies in personal affection and admiration and the prestige which follows victory in a prolonged contest against apparently hopeless odds. His followers still think, as did the Israelites of Ahithophel, that his counsel is as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God.

*THE HON.*  
*T. J. ROOS, K.C.*



## **The Hon. T. J. de V. ROOS, K.C.**

In the closing weeks of 1912 all Dutch Pretoria was shaken by the news that General Hertzog had been ejected from the Botha Cabinet. A hasty meeting was held in one of the parks at which sympathy and support were offered to the martyred politician. It was not a very imposing gathering, and the subsequent march to the deposed Minister's house was a straggling affair, and the excitement soon died away.

But to one of those who took part the protest was virtually the beginning of a political career. There presided over the crowd under the trees, a short, thick-set man, with pale face and heavy black moustache, who though still in his thirties was almost bald. His biting sentences put what enthusiasm there was into the throng. Plainly here was a personal force able to capture the minds of men and to lead them. It was Advocate Tielman Johannes de Villiers Roos, known chiefly as one of the rising barristers in the Transvaal capital, and regarded as a lawyer rather than a politician. He had decided to take a hand in the new game. He proceeded to play it in his own way; and with notable results.

"I regard politics as a game" declared Minister of Justice Roos in an unguarded moment in Parliament in after years when the protest under the trees had become only a distant memory. "A serious game," he added hastily. Yet for a moment the mask had fallen. That flash of self-revelation throws some light upon a remarkable and complex personality. It explains much in his career. A game it is with him, and it is one in which he is never afraid to take risks.

- He is of the same mind as Halifax: "He that leaveth nothing to Chance will do few Things ill, but he will do very few Things."

Tielman Roos plays the game of politics in very much the style adopted by Lloyd George and Chamberlain in their early days. He has the former's power of "peering into the minds of men and multitudes," and the latter's love of unauthorised programmes submitted direct to the people without the medium either of party or Parliament. What J. A. Spender wrote of Chamberlain in 1880 might equally have been written of Roos at any period in the last decade: "He seemed to be bidding for an independent leadership. He said things about the church . . . about affairs in the Transvaal, which had no authority from his colleagues, and sent some of them plucking at Gladstone's sleeve and imploring him to exercise discipline. . . . When rebuked he was, as he used to say, 'unrepentant and unashamed,' the same cool, unruffled figure with the mask-like face and the exasperating smile."

And, like his English prototypes, Roos loves personal and peripatetic politics. He prefers conducting a sort of touring circus round the country to the tedious task of sitting in Parliament. As a private member he was a notorious absentee, and even now he welcomes a chance of sallying forth into the constituencies. Yet these political joy-rides are not planned merely

To show the world that now and then  
Great Ministers are mortal men.

They involve too much strain for a man who for all his massive frame is not immune against fatigue, to be undertaken save of set purpose. They are part of the Game of Politics as he plays it. They have helped to build up, not only his party, but the position of Tielman Roos in public life.

Until he tried his hand at politics, he was hardly known outside legal circles. Born under the Union Jack at Cape

Town in 1879, and educated at the South African College there, he turned to the law as a vocation. It was as a young barrister of 23 that he arrived at Pretoria to seek fame and fortune in his profession. For a dozen years or more he was heard of only in the courts, where he gradually built up a lucrative practice and was expected to end up on the bench.

But the meeting in the park changed everything. There he found a leader; and the leader found a man with driving force and a practical mind able to make a party. Roos took chances and made mistakes, but he did wonders for the cause of Hertzogism in the North, despite the influence of Botha and Smuts. What might have remained the sentiment of an hour became a passionately held faith. Hertzogism grew like the grain of mustard seed. Politically Roos grew with it. He began as the little-known Chairman of an open-air meeting. He developed into the Lion of the North, and the Acting Prime Minister of the Union.

His personal success has been due to his ability to foresee what his particular public wants, and to give it in more generous measure than even his leader is prepared to do. He is always ready to go one better than the next man. In this way he created a special brand of Nationalism, and made himself its prophet.

Hertzog repudiated Botha's "one stream" policy in order to make a more definitely racial appeal to the Dutch. Tielman Roos instantly went one better. He preached secession and Republican independence. Later others raised the cry of South Africa First. Instantly Roos stepped in front again with the somewhat egregious slogan of South Africa Alone. Whether the topic of the moment happens to be bilingualism, or public service reform, or anti-Britishism, or an agitation against church influence in politics, he is always ready to stump the country with a brand of politics rather more heady than anyone else's. It is the way he plays

the game. Give him the platforms in the dorps, and he does not care who has the ear of Parliament.

Hertzog used to utter platitudes about the right of self-government, but Prof. Fremantle, who was once a Nationalist, has declared that he "as a secessionist was never more than a follower." It was Roos who, going as usual one better, translated words into deeds. He it was who took advantage of the British Note to the neutral Powers in 1917 and put in a claim for the re-establishment of the Boer Republics. He it was who organised appeals to President Wilson, to the British Government, to the Peace Conference, and to everybody else who had a moment to spare. He it was who in 1919 suggested that the name of the National Party should be changed to National Republican Party in order that its aim should be unmistakable. At last he was publicly acclaimed "the father of the independence movement." His leader encroached somewhat on his special preserves when he called the Union Jack a "rag." but even then Roos was not long at a loss. He rehabilitated himself by alluding to the influenza epidemic as "the khaki pest." When he settles down to the task, the Lion of the North is not easily out-roared.

Of course a storm of criticism broke upon his head. He became the best-abused man in all South Africa. There were suggestions that his speeches should be boycotted by the papers. He was threatened. But he was unmoved. He smiled blandly, and continued to play the game of politics after his own fashion. After all, a little martyrdom is no small asset to a rising politician.

Sent to the Union Assembly by Lichtenburg in 1915, he took his Parliamentary duties lightly. He was a hardened "wilful missing" from the House, and his voice was heard more often in the dorps than on the front Opposition bench. He concentrated upon kraaling the Dutch voters safely in

the Nationalist Party, thus gradually defeating Smuts's South African Party. But Roos is nothing if not an astute and practical politician. He is hard-boiled, as well as hard-headed. He began to realise that the Nationalist Party could not live by racialism alone. The independence and republican agitation had not given the Nationalists a majority over all other parties. It had merely stabilised the political situation. Stalemate was reached. The general elections of 1920 and 1921 revealed no hope of a Nationalist Party Government in the immediate future. It was plain the game would have to be played in a different way.

Roos always has sufficient mental and political elasticity to meet a new situation. He devised different tactics. Bearing down a great deal of early opposition from colleagues with less nimble brains, he brought about the working alliance of Nationalists and Labourites now known as the Pact. It reduced politics to the simple formula of the Australian party leader who, asked by a French visitor what his policy was, pointed to the Government benches and said, "My programme: to turn out those people." It was Roos's second great service to his party, though one which needlessly meticulous partisans might have objected to as being contradictory to the first. Originally he gingered up Nationalism with the secession and republican battle cry. Now he watered it down until a Labour Party "unalterably opposed" to secession and republicanism could swallow the diluted draught. It was a masterpiece of political ingenuity.

And now a new Tielman Roos addressed a somewhat mystified public. Leaving the racial Conservatism of the backveld, he began to cultivate the towns and democracy. He modified the rules of the game to meet the new strategy. The independence and republicanism which had been held out to the backveld as a prize almost within the grasp of a



mere majority, became in the cities an academic ideal to be attained only by entire unanimity in a future so distant that no sensible being need be perturbed about it. An unauthorised programme with a distinct Labour appeal was duly unfolded. Instead of secession, republicanism, and language rights, Roos now hungered for State banking, diamond cutting, an iron and steel industry, protection, a £20,000,000 currency, and other ingredients of a new Morrison's Pill calculated to cure all South Africa's ills if made up by an honest Pact Government. Flattered and faintly bewildered, Labour men forgot that

Great men  
Till they have gained their ends, are giants in  
Their promises, but, those obtained, weak pigmies  
In their performance.

At any rate some of these bright visions have sadly faded since the Pact's victory at the polls in June 1924. Roos still protests at suitable moments that he will never, never desert his Labour friends, but his vague profession of continued loyalty is unaccompanied by any marked activity in realising that millenium of Socialism in Our Time to which those Labour friends are pledged. There are obviously times when even the game of politics must not be played too strenuously.

Roos has all the high qualities which make a great lawyer and a great judge. He is a clever and witty speaker, and no political leader in South Africa can handle a hostile audience so successfully. He will go boldly into an enemy camp, and it is difficult to recall one single instance in which he has been shouted down. Inclined at times to become a little too cynical and flippant, he restores the balance at intervals by an outburst of full-blooded partisanship. Politicians have to do that sort of thing. Yet probably at heart he agrees with Nietzsche: "We should not allow our-

selves to be burnt for our opinions—we are not so certain of them as all that.” Though a man of strong convictions, he has the knack of making friends, and he collects allies and supporters in all grades of society as though entrenching himself against the day when an attempt may be made to deny his right to the reversion of the Premiership. With Andrew Jackson he believes: “Give up no friend to win an enemy. Be strong with your friends and then you can defy your enemies.” When he withdrew his subscription to a Nationalist paper in the Cape because it attacked him, he wrote indignantly: “It is a fool’s trick to slap your friend in the face in the hope of thereby converting your enemy.” He cultivates the sympathy of the young men, holding with Disraeli that no party which fails to attract youth into its ranks can live. There are times when rather than jeopardise personal support he is inclined to pander to the momentary prejudices of the crowd. There are times when he wanders out far in front of his own side and has to hurry back to the ranks to avoid isolation. His political career has been one long series of indiscretions tempered by threats of resignation. Yet he sees beyond the position of the moment, and is always trying to foster ideas, or mould events, in such a way that the bread cast upon the waters will return after many days.

But the game of politics cannot be played without making sacrifices. For it Roos has given up a large income at the bar. For it he eschews the delights of oversea travel and the comfort of a quiet life, and takes again to the branch line train and the veld road, captivating the young Afrikaner, speaking soothing words to disgruntled Labour, and castigating his pet aversions, General Smuts, the South African Party, and Dr. Malan.

Thus Roos, in perennial dark-hued suit and black bow tie, travels dustily and wearily from district to district,

playing his game of politics and modifying his impish humour, his biting tongue, and his bland persuasiveness, to suit the succession of varied audiences whose mind he reads so quickly. A likable man, accessible, companionable, fond of social gatherings and tea-room gossipings, he has in him nevertheless something of the habitual cynicism, without the aloofness, of great Lord Salisbury. His opinion of human nature as revealed in politics is not high. Nor does he always appeal to the best side of it. He is content to make use of it as it is.

With the skill of a juggler he keeps in motion a queer assortment of loyal friends, ambitious adherents, possible rivals, diverging interests and ill-matched causes. The next man is merely a pawn, and Roos is blandly indifferent to his fate, for

Whether he kill Cassio  
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,  
Every way makes my game.

Tielman Roos will go a long way in politics—or else he will go back to the law. No half distances satisfy him.

*THE HON.*  
*DR. D. F. MALAN.*



Quip  
1929

## **The Hon. Dr. D. F. MALAN.**

Priests have influenced politics in many countries through many centuries, but seldom under democratic institutions does a man exchange the pulpit for a portfolio. Dr. Malan not only did this, but in the space of two years made himself one of the most powerful members of the Union Government, with a distinct claim to a future Premiership.

But then he was always more of a politician than a predikant. His aim had been to perform as well as to preach. Spengler divides mankind into two groups. Apollonian man, such as the ancient Greek, is content if allowed to go his own way. Faustian man lives to make others do what he thinks they ought to do; he has in him the itch of reform plus the impelling force derived from an unshakable conviction that he is always right. Dr. Malan is a perfect specimen of Faustian man. He would make mankind better—by persuasion if possible, by force if necessary. He has in him something of that quality which caused Lord Rosebery to describe Cromwell as “a practical mystic, the most formidable and terrible of all combinations.”

Politics and theology, said Grote, are the only two really great subjects. Dr. Malan's life has been devoted to the study of both, and the association has had marked influence upon his character and his career.

Born at Riebeek West in the Cape Colony on May 22, 1874, Daniel Francois Malan was thoughtful and serious-minded even in his boyhood. From his Stellenbosch school days to his years at the University of Utrecht, he was distinguished by a keen interest in social problems and a kind of idealistic discontent. He saw so much that ought to be better. Con-

vinced of his own rectitude, he was never afraid to state his opinions, but it took him some time to find the most suitable channel by which to put them into practice. He began as a teacher, but soon exchanged the schoolroom for the church. From his first Dutch Reformed pulpit he preached strict temperance, if not prohibition, to the wine farmers of Montagu. They admired his courage but hardly appreciated his views, and he migrated to Graaff-Reinet, where a different agricultural interest provided a more congenial atmosphere for local veto and kindred subjects than he had found among the vineyards of the Western Province.

But the pulpit was too confined and academic for a man of action, and his career as a predikant was not lengthy. In South Africa old political foundations were disintegrating under the acid of Hertzogism. "Die Burger," a daily paper preaching the new political faith, was launched in Cape Town, and Malan stepped from the pulpit into the editorial chair. The reforming spirit was strong within him. He announced that it was his mission to raise the tone of polemics and foster a spirit of unity among the people.

In the event he brought, not peace, but a sword. His editorials breathed the race-exclusiveness of the Old Testament. Incapable of seeing any other side of the cause of Afrikanerdom save his own, he carried out a sort of Pride's Purge and turned the vials of his wrath upon General Botha and his followers and all their ways. He became involved in boycotts and counter-boycotts, and long journalistic quarrels marked by something of the invective with which the disputants of a by-gone age garnished their epistolary wars.

A daily paper suited his powers better than the pulpit, but it, too, gave more precept than practice. Finally he decided, like Aristotle, that a political life was the best of all. He had served his apprenticeship as Chairman of the

Cape Nationalist Party. A vacancy in the Calvinia division opened the door of Parliament. He passed through it, and his active association with the Press gradually ceased. He had found his right platform at last.

Though at a later date he likened the Nationalist Party to the Liberal Party in England, he began his political career as an implacable and unbending exponent of Afrikanerism. At times he was more Hertzogite than Hertzog. An intense secessionist propaganda marked his advent in political life. His maiden speech in Parliament predicted that the independent movement would grow and closed with the quotation:

†  
For Freedom's battle once begun,  
Bequeathed from bleeding Sire to Son,  
Though often lost, is always won.

He was like that in his early days in Parliament—filled with a burning zeal; a man who had scratched the word "compromise" out of his study dictionary.

It seemed difficult to turn him into a practical party man. But politics subtly undermine even the sternest character. In October 1922 he delivered a diatribe against coalition, which he asserted "means the continuous trafficking in principles; it means the violation of conscience; it means double-heartedness and dishonesty on the part of the political leaders who have to try all the time to placate the most widely differing elements among their supporters. It means the raising of opportunism to the level of statesmanship, and the dethronement of principle in order to make way for political lack of character. Under coalition no problem can be tackled or solved in a manly way."

Within six months there was arranged a coalition between the Nationalists and the Labourites, and within another eighteen months three Labour Ministers sat cheek by jowl with Dr. Malan at Cabinet meetings. If he still felt a strong



aversion to coalitions on high moral grounds, he kept his opinion to himself. He also modified his secessionist and anti-English tone, and drew subtle distinctions between "sovereign independence" and "republican independence," discovering that the Nationalists had never contemplated the abolition of the common kingship—a contention which it was hard to square with their 1918-1920 demands for the restoration of the former Boer Republics. On the eve of the 1924 general-election he publicly repudiated a leading article in "Die Burger" which merely reiterated his own pre-Pact sentiments. And later on in the days of the flag controversy he finally agreed to changes which he vowed he would never accept. There are some—every public man has his detractors—who assert upon this slender basis that the rough and tumble of politics have worn away the high moral standard with which he set out. But of course "the Doctor" can explain these apparent inconsistencies. It is a poor politician who cannot show that a seeming contradiction is in reality only one more proof of complete consistency.

Inclusion in the Pact Government in June 1924 gave Malan his chance. He seized it with the calm, cold efficiency which has marked all his career. Entrusted with the triple portfolio of the Interior, Education and Public Health, he found at last scope for putting into practice some of those ideas which had sent him from the Pulpit to the Press, and from the Press to Politics. The Faustian side of his nature developed rapidly.

He reformed everything within his reach. He wanted to reform everybody he met. He reformed the language settlement, and made Afrikaans the second official language of the Union, thus carrying to victory the cause which another predikant and editor had launched at the Paarl half a century before. He reformed the Senate. He reformed the Press—or thought he had, though subsequent events cast

some doubt upon his success. He reformed the conduct of elections. He reformed the civil service, and besides reforming the old Public Service Commission out of existence enunciated the satisfying party principle that all else being equal all appointments ought to be given to Nationalists. He is reforming education by giving it a more definite vocational and agricultural bias. He would have reformed the Asiatics, only they proved to be passively unappreciative of the new driving force in South African life. He reformed the whole nation by endowing it with a new nationality and a new flag. Could he have reformed Mr. Tielman Roos his cup of happiness would have been filled to the brim.

Were Dr. Malan a stout man, his large spectacles and smooth, clean-shaven, young-looking face would give him a little of the appearance of Mr. Pickwick. But there is nothing very Pickwickian in his composition. Though a charming personality in private life, politically he gives the impression of unsmiling, grimness, and implacability—a sort of weekly Day of Judgment. He indulges in no oratorical tricks or platform blandishments. He is not a seeker after publicity, and does not cultivate the Press. He likes to stand out as the stern unbending apostle of aggressive Afrikanderdom. He preaches his faith with an eloquence which has made him the best fighting force the Government has in Parliament. Equally fluent in English and Afrikaans, he never makes a weak or a poor speech.

His early training as teacher and predikant stands him in good stead. He does not argue. He thunders as from a pulpit, denouncing his opponents with sometimes almost unchristianlike vehemence and showering blessings on his own side. Very sure of the righteousness of his own cause, he is equally convinced of the evil inherent in everybody else's. He is the Sea-Green Incorruptible of Nationalism. Yet sometimes he indulges in a dry humour which suggests

that beneath the surface he is a little more human than he would like the world to think.

An efficient and painstaking administrator, he likes to shoulder personal responsibility even in matters of detail. His three departments are admirably run, and though his outlook is regarded as racial he has not troubled them with the staff changes, the reprisals, and the rewards, which in some other offices marked the transition from South African Party to Nationalist rule.

Apart from definite prejudices arising out of the race problem, South African politics are largely opportunist. Among its prominent leaders there is only a handful with carefully thought-out and fixed opinions amounting to a comprehensive and consistent policy. Though upon several occasions Malan's views have proved to be a little more adjustable than his record suggested they would be, he has the strength of a man with convictions moving among those who have mainly interests. At present he ranks third in the Cabinet, but that grading may not be final. Ability, resolution and the acknowledged leadership of the Cape Dutch Nationalists form a very solid foundation for larger ambitions. It is not without significance that Malan occasionally descends a little from his idealistic heights and reminds the world that he stands for the largest province in the Union, that in 1924 it cast 16,000 Nationalist votes more than any province, and that but for the unjust compromise agreed to by the National Convention it would return six more members of Parliament than it does to-day. What ultimate conclusion he draws from these things one does not know, for he is a cautious man, and discreet in personal matters.

Again it is not without significance that "Ons Vaderland," the Tielman-Roos-ian paper in the North, never lets slip an opportunity of criticising Dr. Malan: while "Die Burger,"

the Malan-ian organ in the South, never hesitates to rebuke the Lion of the North when it thinks he is roaring needlessly, or too loudly. It is observed, too, that the fact that one of the twain supports a policy is often enough to make the other oppose it, or at least throw a good deal of very cold water upon it. Mere straws, of course; yet sometimes they show the direction in which a political wind is blowing. They are both strong men with masterful natures. And now as always

Ten dervishes upon one mat sleep well :  
Two kings cannot within one kingdom dwell.

General Hertzog is the undisputed monarch of Nationalism to-day: but the succession issue has not yet definitely been settled. It may be a distant issue; yet already there are obvious signs of manœuvring for position behind the scenes. Tielman Roos and Dr. Malan are gradually drifting into the position of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson in Washington's Cabinet, and in Jefferson's words are becoming "pitted against each other like two game-cocks."



*COLONEL THE HON.  
F. H. P. CRESWELL.*



## **Col. The Hon. F. H. P. CRESWELL.**

Col. Creswell is the Sisyphus of South African politics. Though he has reached Cabinet rank his fate is unaltered. For nearly twenty years he has tried to roll the rock of Labour to the summit of the hill of power, and to-day he is no nearer victory than he was when he began. The special brand of white labour policy he has thrust upward is no closer to success than it was two decades ago. The political party he has striven to make solid and permanent is rolling once more down the slope. Nor is it certain that the personal position he has reached is any more secure. Whatever boulder he pushes up the hillside of public life falls back again, and as often as not his own nominal supporters take a malicious delight in starting the downward run.

He has suffered disappointments that would have broken many a man. But Col. Creswell is made of stern stuff. He has known defeat too often to be overwhelmed by it. In politics he will never scale the final height. But he will never cease to struggle towards it.

Frederick Hugh Page Creswell, the son of Edmund Creswell, Postmaster-General at Gibraltar, and Surveyor, Mediterranean, was born on the Rock in 1866. Educated in England as a mining engineer, he began his professional career on a silver and lead mine in Armenia, and travelled along the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles, viewing some of the most famous spots in ancient history. Then South Africa came into the mining picture, and in 1893 he was up in Mashonaland reporting upon properties. The prospects on the rapidly developing Rand gold field impressed him, and he joined the technical side of the industry at Johannesburg, and when the Boer War broke out served with distinction in the Imperial Light Horse.



He was at first of the political opinion of most Britishers in the Transvaal, but split with their leaders on the labour issue. As manager of the Village Main mine he carried out an experiment with white labour, and its controversial echoes have not entirely died away after the lapse of two decades. The immediate outcome was that he strongly opposed the introduction of Chinese coolies for the mines. In the Transvaal and then in a tour in England he waged war on the idea of the mine-owners, and incidentally ruined his professional career as far as the Rand was concerned.

The struggle drove him into the ranks of the old Transvaal National Party—a pro-Botha British group—and in its interests he stood for Bezuidenhout at the 1907 election and was defeated. After the polling the Johannesburg *Star* wrote: "We have never concealed our opinion that as a politician and economist Mr. Creswell is a dangerous faddist, but it would be churlish to refuse to recognise the energy and transparent conviction with which he has fought an election on ground of his own choosing."

But, if Creswell threw himself into Sisyphean tasks, at least he stuck to them. No sooner was the South African Labour Party formed, in readiness for the first Union elections in 1910, than he joined it. In its name he won the Jeppe division of Johannesburg and was elected Parliamentary leader of the party.

Politically Labour was at the cross-roads. In the Transvaal Parliament it had lent support to the Botha-Smuts Government, but that mood did not long survive the formation of the Union. By April 1913 Creswell had arrived at the conclusion that "besides having a rotten Government, they had an absolutely contemptible Opposition." The industrial upheavals of 1913 and 1914 made Labour as violently anti-Smuts as it was anti-capitalist. As it was at the same time anti-Hertzog, it became the Ishmael of South African

politics. It was, however, of very little account in Parliamentary life. There were only three other Labourites in the Assembly for Creswell to lead. He had himself been arrested during the troubles of January 1914 and sentenced to a month's imprisonment for distributing pamphlets in the streets, but was released at the end of a week to take his seat in Parliament. Still he made the most of his small force and hurled it against the Government in fierce assaults despite the overwhelming odds. There was constant trouble with the Speaker and the Chairman of the Committee, and upon one occasion Creswell moved the adjournment of the House because two Labourites rose and the Speaker did not "see" them, but instead put the question.

Labour activities produced stormy sessions and numerous "scenes," while outside Parliament a ceaseless campaign was carried on against the Government for summarily deporting nine strike leaders. At last a reaction against the Government set in and Labour began to win seats, and so enabled the Sisyphus of politics to roll his rock a little further up the hill.

The World War sent it to the bottom once more. One section of Labour developed stop-the-war and defeatist ideas, and the public re-acted against it. At the 1915 general election Labour shrank to three members in the Assembly, and among the defeated was Creswell, who stood for two constituencies and was beaten in both.

He found consolation in the war. To the South West African Campaign he added the East African, in which he commanded a regiment. In his absence he was returned to Parliament at a by-election, and when the campaign was over he was found engaged once more in the task of pushing his Labour rock up the hill. An uphill task it was, though gradually the post-war depression added to Labour's numbers in Parliament. Yet, the rock was always rolling back

again. Labour secured 11 seats at the 1920 election. In the 1921 election it won only nine.

Creswell's very leadership of Labour was something of a mystery to the public. He seems to be a square man in a round hole. Though possessing a real sympathy for the under-dog, he is by temperament a martinet, and inclined to be autocratic. He is not what the Americans call "a good mixer," and if he won the respect of the rank and file he could hardly be said to have gained their affection. One would have placed him as an advanced Radical rather than an honest-to-goodness, sure-enough, dyed-in-the-wool Socialist. He was neither anti-war, nor Bolshie, and some of his nominal followers were both.

Always a conflict of opinion in the ranks of his party neutralises much of his efforts. The weakness of Labour in South Africa lies within. Creswell would have built the party up upon Fabian lines and appealed to the small men in all classes. The Australian Labour Party at its best is perhaps nearest his ideal. To him leaders and members of Parliament must be representatives, but not rubber stamps. Always he is out of sympathy with democracy of the direct action type, and with Tammany Hall methods. He belongs to the Intelligensia of Labour, and desires it to have control.

Still, having made his choice he preached the Labour gospel with all the ardour of the convert. He marched on with grim determination across long stretches of rough and stony ground, with scarcely even a mirage of ultimate triumph to encourage him. He expounded, too, a stern and unyielding faith, spurning all idea of help and insisting that Labour must advance alone and independent or not at all.

In this mood he told Hertzog in 1914 that he was opposed to Labour "entering into any sort of formal or informal alliance with any other group or section" because under any coalition there would be "merely family parties with no

definite convictions on public matters except that they ought to be in power."

Five years later he was still of the same mind and perceived the Hertzogites to be a "racial party" which "holds out no hope to the man who wishes to come to grips with the economic matters we have been discussing." In the same spirit he turned down the idea of coalition with the Smuts group.

But political expediency is apt to make strange bedfellows. Labour gradually reached the conclusion that it could never do much by standing alone. The Parliamentary tea-room friendship struck up by Creswell and Hertzog during the long years in the wilderness at last removed the former's suspicions of the Nationalist movement. And so there was repeated the conversion of Saul. While Creswell was "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter" there "shined round him a light" which, if it did not come from heaven, at least emanated from Mr. Tielman Roos. In April 1923 he was converted to the Pact faith which he had once repudiated. Henceforward he preached the new gospel, telling the world that

. . . this alliance may so happy prove  
To turn your household's rancour to pure love.

If there was some sacrifice of principle to expediency it did not go unrewarded. The change of tactics was successful. Smuts had kept in the saddle because his enemies had been divided. The Pact meant that three-cornered fights were practically eliminated. The Smuts-ites and the anti-Smuts-ites now stood face to face. In less than eighteen months after his conversion, Creswell found himself entrusted with the portfolios of Defence and Labour in the Pact Government.

Once the first plunge is taken, the process of political conversion would seem to be not unpleasant. Creswell went

on being converted. It became a habit. He was converted from the error that Nationalism had its roots in racialism. He was no longer "fed up" with Nationalist utterances on the bilingual issue. He was converted to a belief in the virtue of the closure in Parliament, which he had once resisted at the cost of suspension. He was converted to Nationalist ideas on defence. He was converted on the flag issue—on the tactics desirable for securing votes for women—on the emergency powers a government might reasonably possess. Once a fierce opponent of imported native labour, he held his peace while the Government permitted larger importations than ever. The sound and fury of his Opposition days gave way to complacent acquiescence in the measures he had once denounced.

Yet even then peace was denied him. The Government of which he was a member did not split. But his own party did, and there broke out the war of the Creswell-ites and the National-Council-ites, the ultimate end of which is still uncertain.

Though a man of many conversions, he is invariably convinced not only that he is right, but that he has always been right. Politically his mentality resembles that revealed by Gladstone in an amusing incident in the House of Commons, the story of which has often been told. Lord Wolmer (who in later years, as Lord Selborne, was Governor-General in South Africa) proposed an amendment to the Home Rule Bill. Gladstone instantly denounced it as unmeaning and absurd. "My amendment," replied Wolmer blandly, "is taken word for word from the right hon. gentleman's own Bill of 1886." With flashing eye Gladstone sprang up and declaimed, "Sir, that was seven years ago! Have we learned nothing since then? Will that party never learn anything?" Creswell has made a similar defence in the House of Assembly with equal confidence in his own rectitude.

He has proved to be an excellent administrator of the coldly efficient type, and he runs his departments smoothly. A complete reorganisation of the Defence Force was planned, the air force was re-equipped, and the ideal of a small but very efficient first line of defence was acted upon. Whatever his political foes may say of him—and sometimes they say a great deal in particularly strong language—the officials brought into contact with him always hold him in high esteem. If sometimes he drives others, he is always ready to drive himself harder still. He is, too, a useful handy man to have in a Government, for he will take over an additional department at a moment's notice, and run it with all the energy and painstaking care he expends upon his own.

Both in Parliament and on the platform he is an excellent speaker with a wide range of knowledge and a thorough grip of the subject in hand. His strong conviction that he is right gives force to his utterances, and he has the gift of scorching invective, especially when railing against the "reptile press," as he calls the newspapers that do not agree with him, or against the Smuts regime. A worrying disposition has frayed his nerves, and left him apt to be hasty and irritable. He has the capacity for attracting sincere admirers, but also a marked facility for making enemies even in the ranks of his own party.

After all these years his Sisyphean labours are not over. The party which he controlled by force of will, and the instinct of leadership, has begun to slip away from him, and his political future is gloomy.



*THE HON.*  
*N. C. HAVENGA.*





## **The Hon. N. C. HAVENGA.**

It was a curious Government that took office in South Africa in June 1924. Of its ten members, one only, and that the Prime Minister, had ever been in a Cabinet before. It was an Administration of All the Experiments.

And of all the Ministerial experiments none appeared to be of more doubtful a character than that which gave the portfolio of Finance to Nicolaas Christiaan Havenga. In most countries the position is regarded as the second in importance in the Government. To South Africa, burdened by taxation and accumulated deficits, the choice was one of peculiar interest. Charles Fichardt, who had originally been earmarked for it in the unlooked-for event of Hertzogism triumphing, had died some years before. An astonished public heard that the portfolio had now gone to "Klasie" Havenga, a big, young, pale-faced Free State protégé of Hertzog, whom a Parliamentary sketch-writer—they were very personal in those days—had described as "voluble" and "muddle-headed."

The routed Smuts-ites smacked their lips at the thought of the mess to come. "Klasie" Havenga, looking a little nervous, said nothing. In less than two years he revolutionised the fiscal policy of the country and established a reputation at the Treasury that will long survive. Hertzog had rightly gauged the capacity of his young friend. One experiment at least was an outstanding success.

Nicolaas Christiaan Havenga was born in the Fauresmith district of the Free State on May 1st, 1882. His parents were on friendly terms with the Hertzog family, then residing in the neighbouring town of Jagersfontein, and the future

Prime Minister met his first Minister of Finance as a quiet thick-set youngster generally called "Klasie." The early acquaintance was renewed in the Boer War. Havenga was by that time a student at the Grey College, Bloemfontein, and he abandoned his studies at the age of 17 and joined the Boers in the field. The James Barry Munnik Hertzog he had known as a Judge had become a General, and "Klasie" attached himself to him as private secretary. The ex-student displayed great courage in the field and was wounded several times, a slight limp to this day bearing testimony to his war services.

After the Peace "Klasie" Havenga faced the reconstruction of his own life. His education had been interrupted. His wounds had impaired his health. The country was poor and depressed, and the opportunities for young Boers were not promising. But if he had no genius, and no special talent, he had the asset of character. He continued his education. He studied for the law, set up with a partner as an attorney, and began to play a small part in local public affairs. When the Union of South Africa was formed he was only 28, but he stood for the Provincial Council, was elected, and became a member of the Executive Committee, soon being recognised as the moving spirit of the Council. The Hertzogite schism made him an ardent Nationalist, and he set himself to the task of converting Fauresmith to the new faith. He tested his work at the general election of 1915, and beat the Botha man by 72 votes.

In a bitter and excited House of Assembly, with nerves frayed by war, rebellion and industrial troubles, he at first attracted little attention. His own side, however, recognised him as a painstaking and dependable politician, and he was given the task of picking holes in the Government's railway finance. When General de Wet dropped out of the curious delegation which went to Europe (via America) to ask for

the restoration of the old Boer Republics, he filled the vacancy, and his first trip oversea broadened his mind and strengthened the bond of friendship with his leader.

But another five years went by before "Klasie" Havenga got his big chance. Then at last the weary Smuts Government fell. The long-abused Nationalists grasped power, and Havenga settled himself down in the chair of the Minister of Finance. There does not seem to have been much competition for the post. Finance had wrecked the previous Administration. There were globular deficits and unpopular taxes. And the unknown and untried Minister was only 42.

But Havenga must have been born under some lucky Budget star. Fortune favoured him. Hardly had he taken office than the depression, which was the last straw that broke the late Government's back, began to lift. A record maize harvest brought into the Union £6,000,000 of foreign money, and put the farmers on their feet. The gold mining industry began to show in larger output and profits the value of the economies effected after the Red Revolt of 1922. Imports increased, and revenue flowed in more freely from all directions. According to Robert Lowe's definition a Chancellor of the Exchequer is "an animal who ought to have a surplus." Havenga answered to it, which no other Union Finance Minister had done for years. He had a surplus with every Budget. It seemed like a miracle. He was lucky, but it was not all luck. There was behind the good fortune a large measure of sound judgment, hard work, and painstaking and careful administration. Havenga concentrated upon the Treasury and took little part in ordinary politics. Nor was he too proud to ask the advice of the very capable permanent officials he found at the head of his Department.

His first three years were extraordinarily active. He re-arranged the financial relations between the Central

Government and the Provinces. He took the Union back to the gold standard. He set aside a fixed annual sum to go toward debt redemption. He re-cast the Union's fiscal policy, and revolutionised the tariff system by enforcing a bolder Protection policy. In doing so he scrapped most of the Imperial preferences and laid the foundation of a new system of trade treaties with other countries. He placed the pension funds upon a sounder actuarial basis. And he delivered the first Budget speech ever made in South Africa in Afrikaans.

The new Finance Minister, too, insisted upon that measure of Treasury control which was a feature of England's Gladstonian Administration but which was everywhere lamentably weakened during and after the Great War. He took up his work in much of the spirit of Harcourt, who when he became Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote: "I shall go to the Treasury and leave the reputation of being the greatest skinflint that ever entered the gates." The pruning knife was wielded with vigour. The spending Departments groaned, but they had to submit. In his own Treasury preserve Havenga does not readily give way. He revealed his ideal one day when somebody twitted him with financial cowardice because his experience had been confined to "the little Free State." He replied stoutly that "the little Free State" had always believed in living within its income and paying its debts, and he proposed to apply those homely principles in national affairs. He is never afraid to tell the country that it cannot go on increasing expenditure and piling up debts.

Havenga is cautious by temperament, and there runs through him a strong vein of conservatism. Like most of the Nationalists he is inclined to agree with old Halifax: "Desiring to have any thing mended is venturing to have it spoiled; To know when to let Things alone, is a high pitch

of good sense. But a Fool hath an Eagerness, like a Monkey in a Glass Shop, to break everything in the handling." He is the pet aversion of the Labour side of the Pact, the left wing of which never ceases to sneer at his methods, which it says, are more acceptable to Big Business than to the honest advocates of Socialism-in-our-time. He will have nothing to do with Labour's demand for a State Bank, and the mere suggestion of an issue of inconvertible Government notes makes him impatient. When some members of his own party talked of abolishing the Second Chamber he promptly set his face against the idea. Though a strong and convinced Protectionist he would lower his tariff were it plain that agriculture was suffering from the high cost of living. His position is strengthened by the knowledge that he is in the entire confidence of the Prime Minister. It was he who accompanied Hertzog to the epoch-making Imperial Conference of 1926 at which the famous Dominion status formula was adopted. The Premier has a very high opinion of the judgment of his private secretary of the Boer War days.

Despite the jibes of the ultra-Socialists, Havenga is both liked and respected in Parliament. He is always accessible and polite,

With reconciling words and courteous mien  
Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

He has the esteem of the Opposition, and the full support of the Nationalist Party, with whom his views carry great weight. Like so many Dutch South Africans, sometimes he fires up on some racial issue, but generally he is very reasonable and level-headed and adheres to Fox's rule "that in Parliament one should say strong things but not in strong words."

Without being an orator, he is a fluent speaker in both official languages, his utterances being of the practical, sober, commonsense kind one expects from the head of the Treasury. He does not carry the sharpness of party warfare into private life, and he would rather make a friend than an enemy, even on the Opposition side of the House. He is, too, essentially a Parliamentarian. Political tours do not appeal to him, and though he enjoys as a rule a good Press—save its Labour side—he has never set out to cultivate it. His interests outside his Department lie in the House, where he sets his colleagues a good example by regular attendance. He owes a great deal to Parliament, and as usual Parliament likes him the better for it.

If his health remains good, Havenga will for many years be a prominent figure in public life. As long as his party is in power he will be Permanent Minister of Finance, and as he is still young there is no reason why he should not one day go higher. In him there is a double portion of that solidity of character which in politics often takes a man farther than genius

## **The Hon. F. W. BEYERS, K.C.**

One sometimes finds even in a democratic Government the political equivalent of Kipling's Cat that Walked by Itself. Of that type is "Willie" Beyers, Minister of Mines and Industries in the first Hertzog Cabinet. Not that there is anything feline about him. But he just walks by himself. He heads no faction. He belongs to no inner group. He has no special political friends; nor does he seem to desire any. Far from cultivating "a good Press," he is apt to be brusque, or even rude, to newspaper people. He can boast of no personal following, and influences no votes. He appears to be where he is chiefly because it is better to have him with you than against you.

And he likes to walk by himself. Though always a keen politician, he does not cling to office, and financially would be better off without a portfolio than with one, for he has given up a lucrative practice at the Bar to indulge in the over-rated joys of being a Cabinet Minister. He is not dependent on the favours of others, and places himself under no obligation to anyone. Sometimes he seems to regard himself as one predestined

"to be mis-spoken and mis-seen of men,"

and yet the habit of aloofness is now so deeply engrained that he makes no effort to be better understood. He does his work conscientiously according to his lights; but the fact that his method, or his manner, or his view, offends others is never a sufficient reason for altering it.

Frederick William Beyers was born at the Paarl, on October 15, 1867, and was the son of a land surveyor practising in the Cape. A clever and studious boy, he went



through the South African College at Capetown with credit. Those were the days when the development of the Rand goldfield offered opportunities unobtainable in the slow-moving Cape. Beyers was one of the first members of the band of ambitious young lawyers who migrated from the Cape to the Transvaal as soon as their schooldays were over. He was only 21 when he arrived in what was then the mining camp of Johannesburg, and passed the law examinations prescribed by the South African Republic, qualifying as attorney, notary, and advocate. He became a partner in a firm of solicitors, and as the camp grew rapidly into a town he achieved both legal and financial success.

The Anglo-Boer War changed the course of his life, and influenced his politics. He did not, like Senator N. J. de Wet, another of the young Cape lawyers attracted by the golden magnet in the north, become a burgher of the Republic and fight on its side. He had retained his British citizenship, and when hostilities broke out he returned to the Cape and set himself to the task of securing legal and other degrees, which he did with notable distinction. When he returned to the Transvaal he gave up his practice as an attorney and was called to the bar. Events, too, had made him a politician. Though he had played no active part in the war, it embittered his views. A staunch South African he has always been, with perhaps a prejudice against the Imperial connection. When he returned to the Transvaal Colony he, as someone said of Senator Borah, "discriminated against the English."

He held aloof from post-war politics until the agitation in favour of Responsible Government, and then he joined Het Volk, the political party formed by Botha and Smuts, and at the 1907 elections stood as its candidate in the Turffontein division of Johannesburg. It was a dog fight between four candidates, for Transvaal politics were in a particularly

fluid state in those days. Botha gave him all the help he could, and when the papers were counted it was found that Beyers topped the list with 90 votes more than Advocate C. F. Stallard, who in later years became the Chairman of the South African Party in the Transvaal. Botha's attitude throughout the campaign had been distinctly conciliatory to the British. Beyers' outstanding contribution was the dictum that "Milnerism was more damnable than Krugerism."

In carrying on his first Government, Botha was handicapped by the extremism of some of his own men. Beyers, like his cousin, the General Beyers who was Speaker in the Transvaal Parliament, Commandant-General under Union, and then rushed into the Rebellion and was drowned in the Vaal River while trying to escape Botha's forces, was apt to indulge in heady racial outbursts. Perhaps it was in the hope of broadening his outlook that Botha took him with him to the 1907 Imperial Conference in London, but in any case the effort failed, and Beyers returned as racially angular as ever. When the Union was formed he was appointed Attorney-General in the Transvaal, and later was transferred to the Cape in the same capacity.

The general impression was that "Willie" Beyers owed a good deal to Louis Botha. But despite this popular assumption Beyers had, he afterwards asserted, been walking by himself. In a debate in the Union Assembly in January 1923 he alluded to his first political chief as "Judas," thereby provoking a scene which had as its sequel a physical encounter in the lobby between Beyers and Sir Abe Bailey.

Though Beyers had in the intervening years become a red-hot Republican—Secessionist—Nationalist, his attack on Botha was generally regarded as almost as ungrateful as was Robert Lowe's campaign against Sir George Gipps, his early benefactor in Australia. Then it was that Beyers

wrote to the "Cape Times" denying that he had ever been under any particular obligation to Botha. He only went to the Imperial Conference, he said, at Botha's urgent request "because his English was weak." As for the Attorney-Generalship, its £1,800 a year meant nothing, for his partnership in practice in Johannesburg brought him "very, very much more." There an unpleasant controversy rested, and still rests. Any way, as Diderot said, "gratitude is a burden, and every burden is made to be shaken off."

From his first essay in politics it was obvious that Beyers would throw in his lot with the most extreme Afrikaner party in the field. When the Hertzogite schism split the first Union Cabinet, he held an official position in Pretoria, and so took no part in the controversy, though privately his sympathies were entirely with the evicted Minister. The approach of a general election, due in 1915 at the latest, impelled him to action. He resigned the post of Attorney-General and flung himself into the political struggle as an ardent Nationalist. Going to the Transvaal, he opposed Col. Mentz in the Zoutpansberg division, but was beaten. He went back to the bar, and three years later the Nationalists found him a seat at Edenburg in the Free State which he has held ever since. Which suggests that, also like the Cat, "all places are the same to him."

In his Opposition years his politics were distinctly of the hot-gospeller variety. He forgot nothing and forgave nothing, and preached a political faith that inclined the moderate man to cry

Oh ! you do bear a poison in your mind  
That would not let you rest in Paradise.

He had been too extreme for Botha. He stepped out even in front of Hertzog. There is nothing conciliatory about Beyers. It is hardly enough for him to say a thing. He snarls

it. He is credited with pushing the Nationalist Party into its bold secessionist pronouncements when Hertzog would have preferred to concentrate upon self-government and independence without laying too much stress upon "cutting the painter." He it was who drove the last nail into the coffin of "hereniging," the movement to re-unite the Dutch.

Administratively also Beyers is inclined to walk by himself. He is a hard and conscientious worker who studies everything for himself, and when he reaches a conclusion neither the warnings of officials nor the suggestions of colleagues carry much weight with him. Almost on the spur of the moment he launched a scheme for putting a Government director upon all mining company boards, but when he went to Europe the Government declined to father it. His important bill dealing with the alluvial diamond diggings was forced through Parliament in the face of well-reasoned protests, and it is by no means certain that it will not prove a troublesome and vote-losing measure. He gave evidence of this masterful disposition even in his first year in the Transvaal Parliament over twenty years ago, when he introduced a bill partially amalgamating the bar and the side bar without consulting either the Bar Council or the Incorporated Law Society.

But he is a strong man in parliaments. He is a master of clear exposition, and no minister can put the outstanding features of a complicated bill so lucidly before the House. He speaks both official languages fluently—and several others as well—and is a ready debater. His set speeches are extremely good. He is apt to say caustic and bitter things upon small provocation, being highly strung, and often hurts a great deal more than he means to. By accident or design he has built up a reputation for brusqueness. His manner is never conciliatory. Sometimes one is inclined to say of him what was said of Robert Lowe: "What is more

remarkable than his learning and his logic is that power of spontaneous aversion that particularises him. There is nothing that he likes and almost everything that he hates." But he distributes his roughness impartially. If he likes to shake a threatening finger at the mining companies, with the financial methods of which he became well acquainted on the Rand, he does not seem to be drawn toward the trade unions. He goes his own way, riding rough-shod over all who stand in his path. Neither time nor success appears to have a softening effect upon him.

To-day he is still the Beyers of two decades ago. After all, as Washington Irving wrote: "A tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener in constant use." He will never be Prime Minister. He will never be popular in assemblies of men. Probably he has no ambitions in either direction. He holds his political convictions very firmly, and scorns expediency and opportunism. He likes to walk by himself and seems destined to do so until the end of his political career.

*THE HON.*  
*C. W. MALAN.*



## **The Hon. C. W. MALAN.**

Some men enter politics ready-made as successful soldiers, financiers or merchant princes. Others serve an apprenticeship. They begin as political office-boys, and make their way to the top by perseverance and ability. These latter are generally the most successful politicians. They begin young, which is an immense advantage. They get the spirit of Parliament into their bones—and all Parliaments love the men who really understand them. And they have no outside reputation, which all Parliaments dislike, being jealous and self-centred entities.

“Charlie” Malan falls in this latter class. He has been politically-minded from his school days. He began by sleeping under the counter and sweeping out the shop of party, and long and faithful service has brought him due reward. In the world outside politics he was merely a very young and unknown country attorney. But he was in Parliament at 31, and became a Cabinet Minister at 40. He was the “baby” of the new Hertzog Government in 1924, yet he was placed in control of all the railways and harbours of the Union, and occasionally acted as Minister of Finance as well.

Charles Wynand Malan, born at the Paarl on August 8, 1884, is a young brother of Senator F. S. Malan, the veteran political leader of the Cape Dutch, upon whom fell the mantle of “Onze Jan,” the great Bondsman. He was brought up in an atmosphere of politics. His father was chairman of a branch of the Bond. When he was a boy of 13, his brother “Fransie” was editing a Dutch paper preaching in season and out of season a gospel of fierce nationalism. The small delicate-looking lad readily absorbed the strong Afrikaner views expressed in his home.



He was educated at Stellenbosch and trained for the law. He faced the humdrum life of an attorney at Humansdorp. But his real interest was in politics. Nor did the faith of his brother, soon a Cabinet Minister, suffice him. With the impetuosity of youth he marched on ahead and found himself in communion with the early Hertzogites. He was 28 when the great political schism split the Dutch, and he disagreed with his brother and joined the more advanced body, poor though its prospects seemed to be.

He had the intense faith of the convert. Though of slender build, with no appearance of possessing the stamina which active politics demands, he quickly revealed a fund of energy, a fiery oratory, and a capacity for organisation which began to make him something of a figure in Cape public life. With a more nimble mind, though not quite the solid qualities of his now famous brother, he threw himself into political affairs with intense fervour. He was apt to be too dramatic over minor matters, which, however, is often a useful defect when one is fighting the battle of what seems to be a hopeless cause. Wherever "Charlie" Malan went, there one heard tremendous and impassioned indictments of the Government and all its doings. The fury of the attack impressed unsophisticated country folk. An administration which roused such transports of indignation must surely be bad indeed. Humansdorp was converted by the fiery young brother of the Minister of Mines, and sent him to Parliament in 1915. The aggressive qualities of the youthful orator attracted attention. He was appointed Organising Secretary of the Cape Nationalists and transferred his activities to Cape Town, from which centre he dashed into the country districts repeating the story of the infamy and inefficiency of the anti-Hertzogite regime.

The spirit of Afrikanerism burnt fiercely in him. No sooner had he entered the House of Assembly than he tabled

a motion in favour of the greater use of Dutch. Indeed bilingualism became with him a fetish; though it was rather amusing to find that when J. H. de Waal moved a resolution in 1918 declaring that Afrikaans should be one of the official languages of the Union he said that all the Dutch members spoke Afrikaans except three—Gen. Hertzog, Mr. C. W. Malan and Mr. C. A. van Niekerk. Republican independence he also preached with fervour, and, though he has pronounced against secession as not being practical politics, he still cherishes the ideal. He began as a hot gossamer of the Hertzogites and on March 20, 1917, moved in the Assembly: "This House strongly disapproves of sending coloured men and natives from South Africa to Europe for any services in connection with the war or otherwise."

But, as the excitement and the bitterness engendered by the Great War began to die down a little, he found himself committed to more practical tasks than keeping alive racial feeling. Havenga, who had been the railway critic of the Government, had to take over the larger questions of national finance. Upon "Charlie" Malan fell the duty of specialising in railway matters for the purpose of harassing a weakening Administration. He threw himself into the work with characteristic energy, and his success made a turning point in his career. When at last the Smuts regime ended and Hertzogism came into its own, he entered the Cabinet as Minister of Railways and Harbours.

It was no light task for an untried and inexperienced man only in his thirty-ninth year; especially as the department seemed to offer a plentitude of those "jobs" for which the backveld supporters of the new Administration were clamouring in thousands. The "baby" of the Cabinet found himself the political head of a railway system of some 12,000 miles of line, and serving (including the late German South West) nearly 800,000 square miles of country and a popu-

lation of 7,000,000. Half a dozen harbours were thrown in as make-weights. The permanent official head of this vast business had been a railwayman in Scotland before the new Minister was born, and was a railway official in South Africa while he was still learning his alphabet. Sir William Hoy was a great railway manager with a good deal of that autocratic, masterful temperament essential to the successful control of a big and complicated business. He was the South African Railway and Harbours. He had crossed swords with Milner while his new political chief was at college, and had stood up to the fiercely economising and despotic J. W. Jagger, his political chief in the defeated administration.

But "Charlie" Malan handled the situation as capably as he had organised his political party. If the masterful General Manager did not get his way in everything under the new regime, he found he was working with a practical, level-headed and generally reasonable politician with a natural capacity for business. "Railways and Harbours" felt no heavy jar when the political switch-over came. The department was emerging from a period of severe stress which made many things difficult, but on the whole the veteran official and the youthful Minister laboured amicably together. They both conceded a little—especially at first. As time went on the politician became more inclined to overrule the railway man, but in any case the latter had only three and a half years to go before reaching pensionable age, and some things could be left for that period. In due season Malan re-organised the administration in such a way that less responsibility devolved upon the General Manager, and pushed on rapidly with the extension of road motor services in place of new branch lines.

Though his training has been so largely political, Malan is an able administrator. He is a quick thinker, grasps details readily, and is always willing to listen to the other

side, and, better still, to make a real effort to understand it. His only danger as the head of a huge national business enterprise is his own fiery Afrikanerism. Often in political life one sees that

. . . . one master passion in the breast  
Like Aaron's serpent swallows up the rest,

and sometimes he seems to find it difficult to curb his passion for bilingual perfection, and to prevent his love for men of his own race doing an injustice to men of another. There have been complainings in the service. There usually are. Thousands of adherents of his political faith certainly found places on the railways; but he claimed that they were new appointments and there was no scrapping of the older staff.

Very earnestly, too, he set himself to the task of learning railway work, and whether in South Africa or travelling in Europe he is keen to see everything connected with the equipment and management of a railway system. He handles men well, which is a desirable quality in the controller of a big business. Suave and good-tempered, he gave at first the impression of being almost too easy-going, but the railway folks discovered a little later that when roused he can be both determined and forceful. In large matters of policy he has revealed ability and resourcefulness. Those behind the scenes during the negotiations for a new mail and shipping agreement for the Union, and for a new Mozambique Convention with the Portuguese, were greatly impressed with his clear and quick thinking and firm grasp of essentials.

"Charlie" Malan would make a good railway manager, but he can still be the keen politician, though he does not stump the country as he once did. He is a ready speaker both in English and Dutch, being indeed perfectly bilingual. If his speeches have no great depth, they are vigorous and pleasing. None of the old fire and passion have been lost,

and he is always ready to improve the shining hour by carrying party propaganda into Parliament, which he sometimes addresses as if it were an electioneering meeting. When criticised he turns easily from argument to a fiery party tirade, his last word always being a challenge to his opponents to appeal to the multitude.

He preaches the larger use of white labour in his department and emphasises his faith in civilised standards and rates of pay. But he applies this policy at the expense of the users of the railway, and will not hear of charging the increased cost to general revenue.

Economics is not his strong point, and when hard pressed he seeks refuge in sentiment, and indulges in the debating process which Carlyle described as the "indiscriminate mashing of right and wrong into a patent treacle." Yet he can clothe the most skeleton-like argument with the flesh of plausibility, having the knack of giving an appearance of reason to most things.

Possessed of abundant vitality and ceaseless energy, he is a willing and tireless worker. It is too early yet to say whether he is a statesman. He is certainly an able politician and a clever party man.

## The Hon. P. G. W. GROBLER.

Somebody said that the world is like a board with holes in it, and the square men have got into the round holes.

But not always. When General Hertzog made Piet Grobler Minister of Lands he gave him a position eminently suited to his temperament and his training. It is true that at first a section of the public did not take kindly to the appointment. To many he was only a political legacy from Kruger's days, a 1914 "rebel," and an extreme racialist given to preaching violent sermons from the text of secession and republican independence. For a big-hearted man with an affable manner and a disarming smile, Piet Grobler had indeed managed to saddle himself with a most sinister reputation. The children in good British households once cried when they heard his name mentioned. But we have changed all that since 1924.

"Oom Piet" is now only an amiable Minister over-working himself on behalf of the poorer whites, and revealing daily

The homely sympathy that heeds  
The common life.

In politics many a man who is supposed to have hooves and a tail turns out to be as harmless as a suburbanite cultivating prize roses.

Pieter Gert Wessels Grobler is a sort of hereditary leader of the more Conservative Dutch in the Transvaal. A nephew of Paul Kruger, he was born in the President's house in Rustenburg district, and educated at the old Pretoria Gymnasium and privately. Family influence was strong in those primitive times, and when quite a young man he found himself Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Kruger Government. He had some linguistic ability and a sound working knowledge of English, while he was facile in hand-

ling the written word. These qualities made him very useful to the old President, and when he fled to Europe in the early days of the Boer War he insisted that Piet Grobler must go with him. Thus it is that Grobler is without that long military record which used to be regarded as an essential qualification for a political career in the ex-Republic two decades ago.

But Grobler spent three valuable years in Europe as secretary and interpreter to the aged President. He acquired more languages and developed his literary ability. He met famous statesmen, and his knowledge of affairs broadened. There appeared in him something of the diplomat which survives to this day.

After the death of the President, Grobler returned to South Africa and went back to his ruined farm in the Rustenburg district. He had to begin life over again, and adjust himself to changed conditions. The hard work of reconstruction fostered that sympathy with the poorer whites which subsequently marked the ministerial career. Also it was valuable training. "Good fortune and bad," says the French proverb, "are necessary to man to make him capable."

With the advent of the Botha Government in the Transvaal, new opportunities opened out before the stalwarts of the old Republic. In 1908 Piet Grobler was selected as a director of the newly-established Land Bank, and a little later became Chairman of the Transvaal Land Board as well. Such quiet back-waters, however, did not long appeal to him. Personally keenly interested in the revival of Afrikaner sentiment, he was also looked upon by the Western Transvaal Dutch as a predestined leader who had survived from the good old days. The dual pressure drove him out of the placid waters of semi-officialdom into the stormy sea of party politics.

When the first Union Parliament was elected in 1910 he stood for Rustenburg, and nobody was bold enough to oppose him. In the schism which soon split what was then called the South African National Party his mind was not long in doubt. He soon threw in his lot with the tiny group of Hertzogites, and most of the Western Transvaal marched after him.

The political excitement of those days finally swept him into the 1914 Rebellion. He was, however, rather an academic rebel, and he figures in the official Blue Book on the upheaval merely as one of those who attended the famous Kopjes meeting of October 13. Still, the part he played gave him eighteen months in gaol before calmer days sent him back to his farm and finally to his seat in Parliament. There he preached the Hertzogite faith, and even objected to the Government spending money on war medals. He was not a great figure in Parliament, but when he spoke you heard the authentic voice of the older backveld Dutch. He opposed an income-tax on the ground that it was inquisitorial, and he protested against Sunday labour on the mines—and became a member of a Government that accepted both.

Years slipped away before he stood again in the limelight. In the Hertzog Ministry of 1924 he figured as Minister of Lands. It was a Cabinet of untried men, but he at any rate possessed some practical knowledge of the work entrusted to him, and no member of the new Government threw himself into his task with greater ardour.

In one respect at least he restored the good old days. He revived the traditions of accessibility and hospitality established by his famous President uncle. From daybreak, when coffee was served on his stoep, to nearly midnight in his office, he listened to the pleas of the humble, and the eloquence of those who felt they had some claim upon the



new administration. They arrived in battalions, and the affable minister nearly wore himself out trying to satisfy them. Often he must have cried:

From plots and treasons Heaven preserve my years,  
But save me most from my petitioners !

Had he controlled Finance as well as Lands he would have placed half the population of the Transvaal on the soil. His portfolio became a rod that scourged his own back, but he stuck to his self-imposed task with good-tempered patience. Old traditions take a lot of living up to in modern times. -

The Lands Department, too, had entered upon an era of change, for it was plain that re-organisation must follow upon the boom days of 1918-1920. To meet the demands of the returned soldiers land had been hurriedly purchased at inflated prices. Settlers were now being strangled by debts, or reduced to poor-white-ism by inadequate or inferior holdings. Literally thousands of people clamoured for the reconsideration of their position. So, in addition to his new tasks, Piet Grobler found himself more and more deeply involved in that of reviewing the work of others. He began to dig into those mountain ranges of files which shut off Lands from the outer world. But evening after evening spent in his office in Union Buildings yielded results. He put land settlement on a new and sounder basis, though in the process globular sums due to the State had to be written off. Finance looked askance at his activities, but in the main he got his way.

But, if he has a soft spot in his heart for the poorer folks on the land, he is not simply a sentimentalist. Knowing himself what farming demands, he has no patience with the won't-work. He holds that a penal labour colony is the place for the lazy man, and when he meets one he does not hesitate to tell him so. Beneath his amiability there is a

determination which is apt to astonish those who trespass too far upon his good nature.

Wrapped up in his Department and its nerve-fraying tasks, Piet Grobler has rather fallen out of ordinary political life. He is not ambitious, and has no liking for party intrigue, being concerned mainly in getting on with his own particular job. He is temperamentally much like the gentleman in Gilbert's verse who always voted at his party's call and never thought of thinking for himself at all. In Parliament he seldom speaks save upon his special subject, on which his fluent but rather over-hurried speeches are always listened to with interest. Despite his old reputation as an extremist and a racial fire-eater, he is popular with all parties, for he is accessible and kindly, and nothing is too much trouble for him. In his administrative work he strives to hold the balance evenly between the two races, and is conscientious, sympathetic, and painstaking. Even when officials and Land Boards think otherwise, he is disposed to give "one more chance" to the settler who is clearly not making good.

In theory at least a republican and secessionist, and a man who has in his time suffered much for his views on national affairs, he harbours no bitterness and makes no enemies. His extra-Parliamentary speeches to-day are marked by a tone of friendliness and moderation, and it is difficult to recall a recent utterance which would hurt the feelings of any reasonably broad-minded South African. Without exercising the wiles of the party leader he remains a power in the Transvaal, particularly in the Western districts. But as a politician he is lacking in guile, being content to hold his views without astute calculations regarding the future. Whatever public life may have in store for him, the poorer Dutch will long cherish a feeling of affection for Piet Grobler.



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*GENERAL THE HON.  
J. C. G. KEMP.*

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## **General The Hon. J. C. G. KEMP.**

Damning the consequences generally ends in political failure. Randolph Churchill wrote his resignation in that spirit, and found too late that he had "forgotten Goschen." In that temper the House of Lords defied the Commons and was beaten into impotence. Gladstone plunged thus when he swallowed Home Rule, and broke his party and himself.

But there are exceptions to the rule. General Kemp is one of them. All his life he has damned the consequences. Sometimes the consequences have damned him; but viewing the results as a whole the policy has been successful. But then South Africa is no ordinary country. It always seems well-disposed toward the man who takes desperate chances. Also it has a short memory and an easy-going temperament.

Jan Christoffel Greyling Kemp, the son of a Boer farmer of good family, received only the somewhat perfunctory schooling available in the Transvaal in the eighties of last century. Probably in any case he was not the stuff of which scholars are made. His youthful ambitions were satisfied by a minor post in a Government mining office on the West Rand. He revealed, as far as is known, no special taste for administrative work, and when the Anglo-Boer War broke out he abandoned the pen for the rifle without regret. He was a very young soldier when he rode out under the famous Sarel Oosthuizen, but his impetuous courage soon brought him to the front, and he became De la Rey's right hand man in the Western Transvaal.

Perhaps it was then that he discovered that there is, after all, something in damning the consequences. His daring and energy infused a new spirit into weary commandoes, and a war that seemed flickering out flared up into the cap-

ture of Lord Methuen and the reckless onslaught at Rooiwal. He ended the war, still in his twenties, as a General and a popular hero in the Western Transvaal. During the peace negotiations at Vereeniging he was one of the Die-Hards and vowed that he was ready to continue the struggle as long as there was life in him. Still he did not go into exile, as did Deneys Reitz, but calmed himself sufficiently to remain in the Transvaal. While Milnerism was dying out, Kemp farmed his father's land in the Piet Retief district near the borders of Zululand and Swaziland.

The Botha regime in the Transvaal does not appear to have given him much opportunity, and though he began to take an interest in politics he disagreed with his leaders on the Chinese Labour issue. It was the formation of the Union that gave him a fresh chance, and after a course of training at Bloemfontein Staff College he was gazetted a Major in the Defence Force. The officers in the Union's little army were no doubt all good South Africans, but in many of them there was certainly no exaggerated love for England or for any form of Imperialism. Indeed, if popular rumour was not misinformed there was rather more discussion of politics than is generally found in the ordinary military establishment.

Then came the Great War, and its first few months in South Africa were marked by the Rebellion. Kemp's old leader, De la Rey, influenced by the strange veld "prophet," Van Rensburg, was in sympathy with those behind what was euphemistically called the Armed Protest. Kemp was at the moment Chief Staff Officer at the Defence Force camp at Potchefstroom, but he resigned his commission on September 13, 1914.

On September 15, De la Rey, hurrying to camp by motor, was accidentally killed by a police bullet fired at his car because it failed to stop—the authorities were in search of

a gang of motor bandit murderers and had orders to hold up every car on the roads that evening. In all probability the fatality checked a more formidable beginning to the revolt.

Damning the consequences once more, Kemp joined the committee of four Generals appointed to organise a national demonstration against the South West Africa campaign. With his usual hot-headedness he went into the new enterprise in the spirit of Daniel Webster's Bunker Hill oration: "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote." So it was scarcely surprising that he soon found himself leading a force across the desert into German territory. He had shown himself to be

. . . . the very slave of circumstance  
And impulse—borne away with every breath,

but he fought bravely and headed a fierce attack on Upington. On December 16 the rebel Maritz issued a grandiloquent proclamation "to the people of South Africa," announcing that the British yoke was to be shaken off and giving the names of the four members chosen as a Provisional Government. The fourth name on the list was "J. C. G. Kemp, Assistant Commandant-General for the Transvaal." Rebellions, however, cannot live by proclamations alone. The cause was hopeless from the first, and falling ill Kemp surrendered to the Union forces, and at the special court set up was convicted of high treason and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment and a fine of £1,000. He vanished from public life. For once the consequences had damned him.

The amnesty of November 1916 gave him his freedom. His military career was plainly over, and he threw himself into politics and the rising tide of Hertzogism. He had what was in those days in the Western Transvaal the unanswerable qualification of a record as a fighter both in the Boer War and the Rebellion. In that stormy area, in



which the prophecies of Van Rensburg were still cherished, he was both a hero and a martyr. There was only one activity left suitable for a man like Kemp. Wolmaransstad provided it; and he found himself a member of the Union Parliament.

Kemp's temperament simplifies politics for him. He has never been cursed with that judicial mind which handicaps so many men for party strife. He does not merely see only one side. He can scarcely believe in the possibility of there being another. So he carried politics into the backveld like a new war. Perceiving only the side of republicanism, and secession, and rifles for the burghers, he preached the damn-the-consequences faith in every dorp. He became one of the bogeys with which the Ministerialists tried to make the flesh of townsfolk creep. When at last the Nationalist cause triumphed at the polls, an admiring Western Transvaal insisted that so stout a warrior must have a seat in the Cabinet. By training and experience he was marked out for Defence, and indeed in the election campaign the Smuts-ites had never ceased to tell the country that one of the consequences of their defeat would be that Kemp would be installed in that office. But Hertzog does not damn the consequences quite so recklessly as some of his colleagues. He placed his impetuous lieutenant in the calm environment of Agriculture.

It was rather a blow, but Kemp did his best to live up to his reputation. He turned Agriculture into a punitive expedition. Enlisting many of his old companions in arms, he declared war against locusts, and personally led his forces into the field. In a whirlwind campaign he destroyed the locusts at a cost which had almost an equally fatal effect on the Treasury, and left the Auditor-General a casualty. By a frontal attack he destroyed the Sheep Division and sacked 470 scab inspectors. Scarcely resting for a moment upon

his new-won laurels he started a second war against scab, and though in Natal it was said that he destroyed more sheep than scab his admirers attributed the sneer to political jealousy. Encouraged by these successes he propounded (rather vaguely) a great insurance scheme for farmers involving the building up of a reserve fund of £10,000,000. Financiers and mathematicians, however, are not to be overcome by rush tactics, and they bluntly declared the plan to be rubbish, whereupon Kemp wisely retreated and turned his attention to compulsory coöperation.

• In his first essays into administration he recalled the remark made of Lord John Russell that while remembering his relatives he did not forget his friends. An army corps of employment-seekers descended upon him when he took office, and his generous heart was grieved that room could not be found for all.

Partisan, impulsive, and rather emotional, Kemp yet possesses some of the attributes of a good administrator. Farmers say that he is an excellent Minister of Agriculture. He has driving force, energy, and personal enthusiasm. A tireless worker, he will tackle any task, and there is in him a genuine desire to do his best for all farmers, whether political friends or foes. His faults are largely the over-development of his virtues. His enthusiasm is apt to become fanaticism; his eagerness tends to grow into ill-considered haste; his loyalty to his own party and his people sometimes clouds his sense of what is justly due to others. But he does not lack moral courage. In his policy there is no spoon-feeding of the farmers simply because they are largely Dutch and Nationalist. He is not afraid to preach the virtues of hard work and scientific training, and to castigate those who are too conservative to appreciate the value of co-operation.

Not intellectually brilliant and possessing a somewhat limited range of knowledge, his appeal is to the heart rather

than to the head, which accounts for his powerful influence among his own people of the Western Transvaal, whose mind he reads so readily. He does not argue. He asserts. He upbraids. His speeches are an aggressive torrent, for in oratory, as in war, he regards attack as the best defence. Under criticism he grows restive and rushes in with a bludgeon, being unable to wield a rapier in debate.

But he is an accessible and friendly minister, and if he often says what he thinks too heedlessly he bears no malice. His politics are coloured by prejudices rather than inspired by principles, and his vision is limited. He talks like a democrat, and acts like a despot. Years and responsibility have softened the old impulsiveness and recklessness. But you can never be quite certain that one day the early spirit will not gain the upper hand, and make him once more damn the consequences.

*THE HON.  
THOMAS BOYDELL.*



## **The Hon. T. BOYDELL.**

Should there ever be made a collection of South African "lives" to serve as stirring examples to the youth of the country of what can be achieved by persistent hard work, it would not be complete without some reference to the story of Thomas Boydell. He is a self-made minister. Like Burke he can boast: "I was not swaddled and rocked and dandled into a legislator. At every turnpike I met I was obliged to show my passport."

That the Honourable Thomas Boydell holds the portfolio of Labour in the Union Cabinet is due entirely to the energy and grit of "Tommy" Boydell, ex-railway fitter. Jerome K. Jerome vowed that work fascinated him so much that he could sit and look at it for hours, and loved to keep it by him. Boydell likes it for its own sake. He loves to grapple with it. Always he yearns to be doing something. He always keeps his shirt sleeves rolled up under his coat, ready at any moment to rush upon some fresh task. If there is nothing to be done, he makes something to do.

He prides himself upon being at his ministerial desk earlier than any other member of the Cabinet. If he takes more than ten minutes over a meal, he ends the day with an uneasy feeling that he has been backsliding. Sometimes the weakness of the flesh lures him into the game of bowls, but one feels sure that he does penance afterwards by setting himself some additional task.

Born at Newcastle-on-Tyne, he left school early to become a learner in a marine-engineering workshop. Had you seen him as a black-haired, swarthy-complexioned lad on the Tyneside three decades or more ago, you would have noticed little difference between him and the next overalled appren-

tice in the engineering trade. But there was a difference. "Tommy" Boydell had in him the will to succeed. Driven by ambition and a consuming energy, he left cut-and-dried England to seek his fortune overseas.

So early in 1903 "Tommy" Boydell was working as a fitter at the harbour of Durban, and three years later was transferred to the railway workshops at the Natal port. He was a trade-unionist rather than a politician in those days, but was keen upon social reform and "up-lift" generally. Also he was completing his education, which had not been carried on the Tyneside as far as he felt it should have been. Sound qualities and the gift of ready speech attracted the attention of his fellow-workers in the service, and when the Natal railway strike of 1909 ended, he was chosen as their representative on the Government Commission appointed to inquire into the trouble.

In the following year came the first elections for the Union Parliament and he was invited by a large number of railway and other workers to stand for Greyville, the Durban constituency in which the railway workshops are situated. He had to resign his post in the shops to fight the election. Defeated at the polls, he found that he could not secure re-instatement in the service. But an initial failure did not drive him away from Durban. He hung on for two years, and then when his successful Parliamentary opponent retired owing to ill-health he fought the Greyville seat again, won it, and has held it ever since.

Parliament gave him his first big chance, and he was not the man to let it slip by. He threw himself into the cause of Labour with enthusiasm, and the years of self-denying preparation served him in good stead.

By careful study and practice he had made himself a good speaker. He had driving force, a talent for organisation, and a tireless energy, while a pleasant manner appealed even

to non-Labourites. He began to win more than a local reputation. He was Organising Secretary of the Labour Party, and its Parliamentary leader in the absence of Colonel Creswell. In the House he was recognised champion of the railway servants, and in his maiden speech spoke for an hour on their grievances. As a member of the Cost of Living Commission he strode hot-foot after profiteers, and wrote a Minority Report of his own in which he revealed a recipe (also his own) for a new heaven and a new earth, careless that

Not for golden fancies  
Iron truths make room.

Labour cut little ice in Parliament in the Great War. Its members could be counted on the fingers of one hand. But to some extent it made up for numerical weakness by its vocal powers. Boydell gloried in such work. He was always speaking and protesting, and obstructing, and being suspended. When not so engaged, he stumped the country denouncing the sins of the capitalists and pouring from platform and press alike a double dose of condemnation upon the Smuts Government. As Labour agitator Boydell, to use one of his own favourite phrases, undoubtedly "delivered the goods." He was happy in the work. He did not appear to want anything more. "What will be your portfolio?" demanded a voice across the floor one day in January 1923 when he was declaiming upon the future of parties. "I don't think I would accept one if it were offered me," replied the modest Boydell. "I would prefer to be in the Opposition than occupying a seat in the Cabinet."

But when Opportunity came his way he was of a different mind. It was less than eighteen months later that there arrived his second great chance. The Pact came, saw, and conquered. At once he took the stage as the Honourable Thomas Boydell, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs and



Public Works. The change left him undisturbed. In a little personal confession written after a week or two in his new office he declared:

"It seems exactly the same to be a Minister as it does to be a fitter. The only difference is that as a fitter I worked at the bench with my coat off. As a Cabinet Minister I work at a desk with my coat on."

But there was a difference. He worked longer hours as a Minister than he ever did as a fitter. Postal officialdom was dumbfounded at the devastating energy of its new political head. He was here, there, and everywhere. He wanted to see everything, and to better most of what he saw. Every fact, figure and face in his departments was seized and retained by his Pelmanised memory. He issued new stamps (without the King's head), started the first air mail service in South Africa, and restored the penny post. He built hundreds of miles of country telephones, and could tell you without calling for a file how many miles of wire had been used and the wage per day earned by the white labourers he employed to put in the poles. He started a national information bureau for farmers, but this could hardly have been a Boydellian idea originally, for it was a failure and was quietly buried and conveniently forgotten. He turned post offices into agencies for finding work for whites. He would have arranged a most advantageous shipping and mail contract, only the shipowners, devoid of public spirit, declined to lose money for sheer love of South Africa; and he was preparing to give the country penny telephones when another turn of the governmental wheel pitched him out of Posts and Telegraphs and into Labour.

Taking another breath he entered upon his new task with unabated energy, incidentally discovering it to be a more important job than the one he handed over to Comrade Madeley. Large schemes for placing poor whites on the land

were evolved, all complete with ready-made villages and fowl-runs, and welfare officers. With the aid of the Wage Board he fixed rates of pay for half the country's industries; and if there were employers who vowed he did more harm than good, their opinion was pooh-poohed in the best Labour circles as prejudiced. He built roads on his settlements with white labour instead of black, and sighed because a short-sighted Legislature had not given him an opportunity of building all the roads in the country. But it was troublesome work. In the happy Opposition days when promises could be made without any immediate necessity for performance, he had vowed that Labour could cure unemployment. Nor would he accept the then Government's excuse that Provincial and local authorities were responsible for this and that and the other. Boydell would have none of it. The Government was to blame. The chickens came home to roost. As Minister of Labour he found himself complaining that the Provincial and local authorities would not do enough, and of course a joyous Opposition recalled the Boydellian assertion that the Government alone was responsible for everything. In politics, circumstances do indeed alter cases.

Even those who dislike his schemes admit that he is an excellent administrator. He has the gift—most Labour men have not—of being able to recognise a fact when he is shown one, and he never tries to persuade himself that it is an illusion. Personally efficient, he has no sentimental weakness for the inefficiency bred by lack of effort. The inventor of the slogan, "Deliver the Goods," he is not prepared to grant exemption even to down-and-out whites, and he has placed on the Statute Book a law setting up penal colonies for "won't-works." The sterner Socialists have been scandalised at times by his insistence that even relief works must be run upon "economic lines." He has a quick grasp of details and

a good head for business, and is endowed with a large measure of tact and sweet reasonableness.

Without being an orator, he is a good speaker both in Parliament and on the platform. Somewhat devoid of the saving grace of humour, and not quick at repartee, he puts a case clearly, and his unusually good memory makes him a master of details. He has been known to listen to a two days' debate on his Estimates without making a solitary note, and then reply to a dozen or more critics without forgetting one of the long list of questions put to him. But he has always been too much a specialist to be a statesman, and his vision is rather narrow. He prefers to face a particular and practical subject, and within its limits he is not easily cornered. Training and temperament have not carried him much beyond that.

But, though he may not realise it himself, the Honourable Thomas Boydell is not quite the "Tommy" Boydell of ten years ago. Few men can sustain Cabinet rank unchanged. No Labour man can sit in a Tory Ministry and remain exactly the same. The Honourable Thomas Boydell is more diplomatic, more soothing, more given to the study of compromise and expediency, than was "Tommy" Boydell, Labour organiser. Extreme Labour grumbles that his essentially practical mind is a little too well satisfied with things as they are, and not quite as concerned as once he was with things as they ought to be. The world, it seems, is not quite so bad a place as it was before Thomas Boydell became a Cabinet Minister, and the need for drastic reform is not quite so urgent as it once seemed to be.

To the Socialist Die-Hards he appears to have become mellow and deplorably self-complacent. But all successful men have their detractors. Boydell makes no angry reply. He adds another hour to his working day, points to what he has done, and whispers that he is "delivering the goods."

## **The Hon. H. W. SAMPSON.**

Those who preach the modern gospel of Get On or Get Out assure a less confident public that if you try hard enough for any given thing you must in the end obtain it.

There is support for this encouraging faith in the career of Henry William Sampson. It secured for him the position of eleventh Minister in the Hertzog Cabinet; and, even if it should prove to be rather a stop-gap appointment, the holding of a portfolio is not an unsatisfactory climax to a political career.

After all, twenty-one years in Parliaments and over three decades spent in the Labour cause make a period of service entitled to recognition, even though the claimant may fall within Samuel Johnson's definition, "not below mediocrity, nor above it."

An unshakable perseverance has been the keynote of his incursion into public life. Born in London on May 12, 1872, he was the son of Henry John Sampson and Jane Webb, "both workers." Two London schools gave him the limited education which in those hard Victorian days was considered sufficient for a boy of the working classes, and at the age of 11 he was apprenticed to the printing trade. He completed his education himself, being a studious lad, and when he became a full-fledged journeyman printer he shook the mud of London from his feet and set out to seek his fortune in South Africa, then first impressing the world as Golconda and El Dorado combined.

It was as a printer that he settled down in the Cape Town of the pre-Raid days. Wages were low and conditions bad, and trade unionism was almost unheard of. Like so many young men, Sampson had dabbled in Socialism, and his first

public work in South Africa was associated with an effort to raise the standard of wages in the printing business. There was a strike, and Sampson was black-listed by the horrified Cape Town masters and had to transfer his activities to the Eastern Province.

It was after the Anglo-Boer War that he made his first appearance in political life. He went to the Rand when peace was proclaimed and was elected a member of the Witwatersrand Trades and Labour Council, becoming its secretary in January 1903. The anti-Chinese agitation brought him into contact with Colonel Creswell. It was a period of kaleidoscopic politics. New organisations and parties were springing up to prepare the way for the switch-over from Milnerism to either Representative or Responsible Government. Sampson joined with W. H. Andrews, A. Crawford and J. T. Bain and launched the Transvaal Independent Labour Party.

The victory of Campbell-Bannerman in England sent the scale down on the side of Responsible Government, and the Transvaal elections were fixed for February 20, 1907. There was much manœuvring behind the scenes in order to avoid contests between men of the same frame of mind, and a somewhat crude pact was formed for election purposes. It was in these days that Sampson developed that talent for mole-like activities which has characterised his political career. If he did not march in front, he was very busy in the background arranging the formation of the forces. In the scramble for seats only three Labourites drew prizes. Sampson was one of them. He defeated F. W. Blood in the City and Suburban division by 54 votes, and with Peter Whiteside and John Reid represented Labour in the Transvaal's first Parliament.

When Union threw the two old colonies and the two ex-republics into one State, the Labour Parties also merged

into one. The South African Labour Party was formed, and H. W. Sampson was its first chairman. It was he who, when the elections came round, solved the problem of avoiding Labour opposition to Colonel Creswell, T. Boydell and W. Wybergh by persuading all three to join the party and stand as official Labour candidates.

Sampson was returned for Commissioner Street, and though the constituency in time changed its name and altered its boundaries, he has held it ever since. He made nursing a constituency a fine art, and so thoroughly was he entrenched that he was not always opposed.

In the violent industrial storms that swept across united South Africa he did not stride forward as recklessly as some of his colleagues. He has never been a man who damns the consequences, being temperamentally more concerned about making sure that the consequences do not damn him. He was, too, the representative of the Typographical Union, a powerful and mildly conservative body which liked to move in an atmosphere of respectability.

Of course he fought on Creswell's side in Parliament in the furious debates which disturbed the session of 1914, when the little Labour group obstructed the Indemnity Bill and castigated Smuts for the deportations. He was one of those who supported the motion to make the largest cut in the Estimates ever proposed—to delete the Governor-General's £10,000 allowance on the ground that his dispatches had been unfair to Labour.

Yet for all his excellent work on the Miners' Phthisis Bills he began to drop back a little in the Labour ranks. Perhaps it was that, as he himself confessed, he did not get as excited over Labour issues as he had in his younger days, and was thought to be lacking in enthusiasm. Possibly his love of mole-like activities weakened his claim to leadership.

Whatever the reason, his influence in the councils of Labour seemed to wane a little. The necessity for provincial representation may explain his passing over when the Pact Government was formed in 1924, but his failure to secure the eleventh portfolio a year later was significant. It was a distinct blow for which trips to Geneva formed inadequate compensation. The portfolio went to Walter Madeley, who had always waved the red flag more violently than the diplomatic Sampson. There seemed to be nothing in the creed that if you try hard enough you will get what you want. Even Sampson's faith in himself was shaken. 7

But in the end perseverance was rewarded after all. The jaunty, hatless Madeley, swinging along with stick on arm, trampling roughshod over his high officials and planning drastic changes in his departments, turned out to be a ministerial Humpty Dumpty. At the end of three years his Cabinet colleagues had had enough of him, and he was requested to resign. As he declined to do so, Hertzog, repeating Botha's tactics of 1912, resigned instead, and created a new Government in record time. In it Henry William Sampson sat in the seat of Walter Bayley Madeley.

He proved to be a much "safer" Minister than the irrepressible Madeley, and the high officials in the Post Office breathed again. Upon occasion Sampson may ignore official advice, but only after he has satisfied himself that personal assertion involves no undue risks. Temperamentally he always plays for safety—and Sampson. If he does nothing brilliant, he will make few mistakes. Madeley did nothing brilliant, but he was all mistakes. So, from a Pact Government as well as from a Sampsonian point of view, the change was eminently satisfactory.

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*GENERAL THE RT. HON.  
J. C. SMUTS, P.C.*





Quip — 1000.

## *PART II.*

### EX-CABINET MINISTERS.

#### **General the Rt. Hon. J. C. SMUTS, P.C.**

A statesman cannot be too careful in choosing his defects. Sometimes they are aids to success; sometimes they are the cause of failure.

Much depends upon the temper of the period. Hertzog's defects of race exclusiveness and political narrowness converted early defeat into a triumph. Smuts's defects of autocracy and love of power carried him to many victories and then transformed them into temporary disaster. But his faults are the big faults of greatness. "It belongs to great men to have great defects," wrote Louis XIV. in his memoirs.

Jan Christiaan Smuts is a world statesman whose name is familiar. No South African has achieved renown in so many different spheres of human activity. None has reached the front rank so quickly in everything he undertook. He served no long apprenticeships, and seemed to be able to skip the middle part of all his ladders. Born on May 24, 1870, he is first remembered as a delicate boy tending goats and sheep on a Zwartland farm in the Cape. His early education was delayed, but once it was begun a powerful intellect and remarkable memory carried him forward rapidly. In him, ambition developed early. He wasted no energy on games, and frittered away no time on useless friendships. Even when at school he impressed others. As head boy at Victoria College it fell to his lot to deliver an address to Cecil Rhodes, and John X. Merriman, who listened to the youthful orator, turned to Smuts's father with the

remark: "He will be first man in South Africa." Politicians are not as a rule successful prophets, but for once at least Merriman's vision was correct. The clever, self-centred schoolboy at the Cape became the lonely student winning triumphs at Cambridge, and the lank, gaunt young barrister in Johannesburg in its mining camp days.

While he was still a barefooted boy on a farm, South Africa had awakened from a long sleep. The discoveries of diamonds at Kimberley and of gold on the Rand gave new life to a depressed and poverty-stricken land. Soon the young men saw visions and the old men dreamed dreams. At last there were opportunities for able and ambitious youth. Smuts was both. He resolved to carve out a career for himself. By temperament he was masterful and full of self-confidence, yet in those first days he trod as delicately as Agag. But the trend of his mind was revealed early. At the age of nineteen he wrote an article which showed he was a strong individualist. Before he was twenty-five he addressed a crowded public meeting at Kimberley in support of the Rhodes-Hofmeyr coalition in Cape politics. He was a staunch South African, and preached even then the gospel of "a great South African nationality," which was so often his text in later years. But he edged towards the side of power and wealth. Interested as he was in metaphysics and philosophy, he had an extremely practical mind in everyday affairs—especially his own. His ideas might soar to the clouds, but in his politics he came down to earth.

Besides, an early difference in training influenced the ideas of Smuts and Hertzog. The former went to a university in England; the latter to one in Holland. Smuts had the wider vision gained in the larger country. There has always been in him much of the Rhodes outlook and method. The big thing fascinated him. The goal was always more important than the route by which it was reached.

The Raid, which was worse than a crime because it was a racial and political blunder, threw him, like Jan Hofmeyr and others, back upon the narrow racialism of the Kruger party. From being a Rhodes-ite in embryo, he became State Attorney in the Kruger regime at Pretoria. He was only twenty-eight, but responsibility began to develop his imperious nature and dislike of opposition. The Boer War made him a national leader and a famous guerilla soldier, and, what was even more valuable, left him improved health and a stronger constitution. He fought long and fiercely; but the practical mind was still there. When success was obviously hopeless, he advocated peace and prepared to work out his future within the powerful British Empire which he had denounced in "A Century of Wrong."

Having secured the Peace of Vereeniging, he retired to his farm and his hobbies of philosophy, Greek literature, and botany, to await a new opportunity. It was not long in coming. While he sat under his orange trees and read Kant, and wrote bitterly of "a country spinning merrily to perdition," Milnerism suddenly flickered out. In England the wheel had turned full circle, bringing Campbell Bannerman to the top.

When the curtain in South Africa rose again, it revealed a Responsible Government setting, and Botha and Smuts strode boldly on to the stage. It was a Botha Government, but Smuts pulled the strings. A master of the arts of compromise and management (when he chose), he soothed ruffled racial feelings in the north. The play did not perhaps develop quite as some of the Transvaal Dutch had anticipated. It differed from that staged by Hertzog in the Free State. But in the transition period Smuts would no doubt have echoed one of Disraeli's early speeches and said: "The conduct and the opinions of public men at different periods of their career must not be too curiously contrasted in a

free and aspiring country. The people must have their passions, and it is even the duty of public men occasionally to adopt sentiments with which they do not sympathise, because the people must have leaders."

Not for nothing had the attributes of Smuts's practical mind been crystallized by his own homely people into the expressive adjective "slim." A political experiment which at the outset appeared to be working out upon rather sharply racial lines was rapidly toned down. The new Administration began to function with more smoothness than had been anticipated. The mining industry lay down with the Boer lamb. Even the Unionist Opposition drew in its claws. As a practical politician Smuts was a success.

But soon the masterful side of his nature began to develop. There were early glimpses of the change in his crushing of Gandhi's Indian passive resistance movement, in his pushing through of the increased payment to members in the last days of the Transvaal Parliament, and in his insistence upon lavishing the Transvaal's surplus on the erection of Union Buildings in Pretoria. Smuts tasted the delight of having his own way, and found it good.

In 1910 the two ex-Republics and the two British Colonies merged their destinies, and some of them their debts, in the Union of South Africa. It was largely the work of Smuts, who realized the advantage of going to the National Convention with a carefully prepared plan, while others had only vague ideas. He knew exactly what kind of federation he wanted, and he took with him to Durban nineteen experts to discomfit those who differed from him. The Union of South Africa was built upon a typically Smutsian plan. Like that which Alexander Hamilton fought for in the United States, it favoured unification rather than federation, and set up a strong centralized Government. It spelt Power.

The Union gave him a wider stage, and his frame expanded accordingly. In the Transvaal he had been chiefly the astute politician, pulling strings, and sometimes adjusting his own views to meet changing situations. Mark Twain would have said of him that "there was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth." Now he grew, mentally, physically, and especially imperiously. The "Slim Jannie" of the Transvaal Parliament became "The Boss" in the Union Parliament. Botha may have proposed, but Smuts disposed. It was he who fought the strikers on the Rand in 1913 with *English Dragoon Guards*, and again in 1914 with burgher commandos, and field-guns trained on the Trades Hall. It was he who whisked nine of their leaders off to Durban by night, and put them on a steamer and shipped them to England despite the shrieks of their colleagues and an attempt to stop them with the aid of the Supreme Court and a steam tug.

It may have been a necessary display of force, but the Transvaal Labourites, who had backed him six years before, turned from him for ever. In Parliament he spoke cynically of "these gentlemen upon my honours list." Labour never forgot or forgave.

The Great War silenced these minor tumults, and "Slim Jannie" strode across a world stage. It did not overawe him. He expanded to fit it. He became a world statesman, entrusted with delicate missions, conferring with rulers and kings, negotiating the fate of nations, planning campaigns, re-drawing maps, making history. It was the very climax of a great career. Smuts enjoyed every hour of it. He did the work well. Had he to do it again, he could hardly better it.

He returned to South Africa a great figure. Then Fate removed his former chief and life-long colleague, and upon him fell the mantle of Prime Minister of the Union. The old Smuts had not entirely gone, but the defects now stood out

in the glare of high noon. Lord Buxton says that Smuts at his first meeting with his caucus after he became Prime Minister told them that he, unlike Botha, "had neither tact nor patience, and they must take him for what he was worth." The new Smuts was more than head of the Government. He was the Government. He was the Cabinet—all the departments of State—the party caucus—the civil service—the army—Parliament.

In the days of his political youth Sir William Harcourt wrote to Gladstone contrasting the methods of Prime Ministers. He praised Lord Palmerston's way because "in those days Cabinet Ministers dared to have opinions of their own and frequently made them prevail"; while of Mr. Gladstone's regime he protested that "a party or a Cabinet which only meets to register submissively the varying fancies of an individual, without daring even to remonstrate or to discuss, is sure to perish." The Union Cabinets in the heyday of Smuts's power were early Gladstonian rather than Palmerstonian. And perhaps there is a measure of truth in the Harcourtian dictum.

Wide visions spread out before the Smuts of the first post-war years. In more primitive times he would have marched on as conqueror and made a great United States of South Africa stretching from Table Mountain far into the darkening North. He has in him the temperament of an Alexander or a Napoleon. But though the Man was at hand the Hour was not. Smuts may have been right, but like Burke he was right before his time.

The South Africa to which he had returned saw no great vision. It had withdrawn into itself. It was troubled by little, prosaic, everyday bread and butter problems not visible to a potential Empire-builder. Hertzogism was preaching a gospel of littleness and isolation. The reputation of a world statesman was a handicap rather than an advan-

tage among the Dutch, who are apt to be jealous of their leaders, especially if they have won renown overseas.

Then the gloom of world depression blotted out the glorious visions, and with it came the Red Revolt on the Rand, and the kind of civil war into which that outbreak sank in bitterness and ruin. Deficit piled upon deficit. Retrenchment was the order of the day; and with every stroke of the Treasury axe old supporters fell aside and new enemies rose up.

Every election revealed an exodus of the Dutch to the Hertzogite camp. Smuts applied the practical side of his mind to the problem. He proposed a Best Man Ministry supported by all parties. He sketched out (in private) new alliances—largely upon his own terms, which were high. It was in vain. Labour cast in its lot with the growing force of Hertzogism for the express purpose of overthrowing him. The old Unionist, or British, party, which had long voted with him in Parliament, merged itself in Smuts's South African Party; but even then the Government majority continued to shrink. Three general elections in four and a half years bore testimony to the long-drawn political uncertainty. At the third Smuts crashed and the Nationalist-Labour Pact went back to the House of Assembly with a majority of 28. The pendulum which had swung towards Smuts for seventeen years moved relentlessly in the other direction. An era in South Africa had ended.

More than a change of Government was revealed by the fall of Smuts. What was disclosed was a change in national mentality. He must have seen it approaching, for all the optimism of his electioneering speeches. Probably he believed he could bend it to his will, as he had bent so much else. A dozen years earlier he would have adjusted his policy to meet it. But the habit of autocracy gains a strangle-hold, and he held on his way.



Temperament has made Smuts a commander rather than a colleague, and he has the defects of most born leaders. His power does not lie in personal magnetism—which he lacks—but in intellectual strength, and masterful character, remarkable political agility, and a ruthless tenacity in pursuing his objective. He makes more ardent followers and bitter enemies than he does political friends. It is generally agreed that the first and most indispensable qualification for leadership in Parliaments is to know how to suffer fools gladly. In the days when he was pushing his way to power, Smuts may have assumed that virtue, but there was no evidence when he was in command that he ever possessed it. His brilliant though cold intellect bred a supreme self-confidence which led him more and more into dangers and difficulties. He grew to dislike advice, and so preferred colleagues who were content to be clerks. If you were not whole-heartedly with him, everywhere, and upon every occasion, you were against him.

Somebody said that the Truly Great are always ruthless. Upon that test Smuts is entitled to a place in the small minority. He will use men and parties like pawns on a chess board, but he can always justify a policy. In political warfare he is inclined, as was said of Gladstone, to follow his conscience in the same manner as the driver of a gig follows the horse.

These, however, are the defects of temperament which fall to the lot of many great men. His vision is generally clear, though he is apt to see ahead of his generation. History will probably acclaim his ideas on large issues to have been the best, even though they were defeated. In matters of detail he is less sure, and in finance especially is apt to be wrong. Upon economic issues his instinct is usually sound, though he is not at his best when arguing economic questions.

In victory he has been a curious mixture of the idealist and the hard, practical, self-centred politician. Indeed, he is a man of many contrasts, and while given to making superlatively optimistic speeches about his own side is prone suddenly to grow pessimistic and moody concerning his own career. He is an admirable speaker, though perhaps better in broad assertion than in close argument, and is apt to ignore awkward retorts rather than attempt to refute them.

Defeat has somewhat softened his despotic and imperious nature. Smuts, the Leader of the Opposition, is more human than Smuts the Mussolini-like Prime Minister who smashed strikes, put down rebellions, won campaigns and dominated Governments. He sits in Parliament, chin upon hand, listening silent and unmoved to the torrent of abuse showered upon him by implacable foes. He hears his work sneered at and his motives scorned. He neither bows before, nor fights, the storm. Cold, impassive, wrapt in thought, he lets it pass. There has indeed been a remarkable change in his position; but one that has its consoling side. "Take it from me," said Gladstone to Morley, "that to endure trampling on with patience and self-control is not a bad element in the preparation of a man for walking firmly and successfully in the path of great public duty. Be sure that discipline is full of blessings."

Boastful enemies allude to him as an extinct volcano; but beneath a stoical exterior the old fire burns. He never admits final defeat. He bides his time. As age is measured in statesmen he is still young—younger than was Disraeli when he formed his great Government—twenty years younger than was Gladstone when he assumed his last Premiership—below the average age of English Prime Ministers. He has crowded into thirty years the triumphs and defeats, the ambitions and the activities, of a dozen

men, and yet the will to power remains, and hope is not dead. With a hard frame and splendid health, he has unshaken faith in himself, and a fierce determination once more to bend events to his will. A past master in political strategy, and a ruthless opponent when opportunity reveals a way, he may yet write his name across another page of South African history. He knows how to wait. And as Halifax said "The Man who is Master of Patience is Master of Everything."

*THE RT. HON.  
SIR THOMAS SMARTT, P.C.*

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*Caricature*

## **The Rt. Hon. Sir Thomas SMARTT, P.C.**

When Cecil Rhodes encouraged the fashion of combining medicine and politics, an unusually large percentage of South Africa's medical men became prominent in Parliamentary life. Sir Thomas Smartt is a survival from that halcyon period in Cape history. Of all the men who held portfolios in the four Ministries which ruled the Cape of Good Hope in the last decade of the nineteenth century, he alone remains to-day in active politics. There clings to him something of the nineteenth century attitude and manner. He is a politician of the old school, which, though it had its faults, also possessed some virtues not so readily discernible to-day.

Thomas William Smartt is an Irishman whose brief incursion into the science of medicine seems to have enabled him to discover the elixir of perpetual youth. No book of reference reveals the year of his birth. His tall athletic figure, jaunty step, and fair hair still untouched by grey, give him the appearance of a man of fifty, though in point of fact he is over seventy, having been born on February 22, 1858. He was a Cabinet Minister over thirty years ago, and sat in Parliament when several members of the present Union Government had not finished their schooldays.

Coming to the Cape nearly half a century ago as a young medico in search of a practice, he settled down as District Medical Officer at Britstown.

Medicine was a profitable profession in those days and together with some sound investments in land relieved him in a modest way of the proverbial "eternal want of pence that vexes public men." He became the head of a large agricultural proposition in the Britstown area, and being an Irishman, as well as a farmer and a doctor, he joined the

Afrikaner Bond. No doubt his Irish blood led him instinctively towards the Bond, which preached the exclusive faith summed up in some political doggerel of the time, which ran

We want no British Government,  
No cumbrous code of laws,  
No grand expensive officers  
With plunder-seeking jaws.

It was his fame as a farmer that opened the door of Parliament. Dr. Smartt (as he then was) succeeded to the Chairmanship of the famous "Scab" Commission of 1892, and the excellence of the report he wrote led the Bond to nominate him as their candidate for Wodehouse in the general election of 1894, and on May 19 of that year he took his seat in the old Cape Assembly and a month later his maiden speech (on "scab") stamped him as a coming man. If he had not kissed the blarney stone in his youth, he had the natural gift of oratory and a most persuasive style, and he immediately gained the ear of a House in which the standard of speaking was high.

The golden days of the old Cape House had not yet faded. It was still an assembly in which Latin quotations could be made and appreciated. Men like Upington and Merriman would have held the attention of the House of Commons. "We have the best men in the country in the House," Rhodes once told his fellow members, and he set up as an awful warning to them "the methods of Australia and other colonies where members indulged in vulgar personalities."

For a capable and clever man advancement was easier perhaps than in later and more stabilised party times. Politics ran upon personal rather than upon party lines, and the frequent changes in the kaleidoscopic groupings created opportunities for the younger members with ability or influence behind them. Distant observers were, it is true, mystified and became irritated at what they did not under-

stand. It was of this period that Harcourt wrote to Ripon: "In dealing with these Cape eels it is necessary to have sand on one's hands."

Politically the Cape of Good Hope had long been something of a curiosity. Its first nine Ministries rose and fell without an appeal to the electorate. There were of course general elections at intervals; but Governments came and went between them, and from 1872 to 1904 there was no appeal to the country as the result of the overthrow of a Ministry.

The eloquent and humorous Irish doctor plunged cheerfully into this maze, but before he had gone far the Raid ended the golden age of Cape politics and Smartt found himself out of touch with the Bond, and so joined the Rhodes group in forming the Progressive Party.

Sprigg, always ready to be Premier whether he had a party or not, was trying to keep his Third Ministry above water. When Te Water, another politico-medico and Bondsman, resigned his portfolio, Sprigg wired to Smartt asking him to fill the vacancy. Thus after only three years' apprenticeship in Parliament Smartt found himself in 1897 Colonial Secretary and Cabinet Minister. In five months the Sprigg house of cards tumbled, but Smartt had now got into his stride, and threw himself into the growing maelstrom of South African politics with all the joy of an Irishman in a fight.

The irrepressible Sprigg was back in the saddle again in 1900, and Smartt was with him as Commissioner of Public Works. But the golden period had ended. Edmund Garrett had converted Rhodes to complete Progressivism. The Boer War finally wrecked the race co-operation so badly strained by the Raid. A rough and more bitter political era began. Smartt, like Garrett, saw in Rhodes "the Necessary Man," and split with Sprigg over the proposed suspension of the



Cape Constitution. Smartt said it was not he who had left Sprigg, but Sprigg who had left him, and he quoted some election doggerel to prove his case:

I leaned my back against an oak,  
I thought it was a goodly tree,  
But first it bent and then it broke—  
'Twas thus my "Sprigg" deserted me.

Smartt might indeed have become forthwith the leader of the new Progressive Party, but, as Ian Colvin says, "he helped to force Jameson into an office which he might have claimed for himself."

In 1904 Jameson came into power and Smartt served for four years in his Cabinet in charge of Public Works. Then for thirteen years he wandered in the wilderness of Opposition. Yet they were eventful and useful years, for although not a Cabinet Minister he was one of the delegates to the National Convention, and in Parliament did much to push forward the claims of agriculture and irrigation.

Just as he had been Rhodes's right hand man in the siege of Kimberley, going the daily round with him and listening to the inevitable question "Do you want anything?"—so he became Jameson's right hand man in politics. Together they toured the new Union in 1910 when his now weary chief addressed his last great meeting in Johannesburg. And when in the following year Jameson could stand the strain no more, he nominated Sir Thomas Smartt (the Knighthood had come early in that year) as his successor in the leadership of the Cape Progressive, or Unionist, Party.

It was not until 1921 that the merging of the Unionists into Smuts's South African Party brought him back into office. He received the eminently suitable portfolio of Agriculture and held it with outstanding success until what Rhodes would have called the "fy-asco" of the general election of 1924, when the long-threatened Smuts regime crashed and Hertzogism mounted into the saddle.

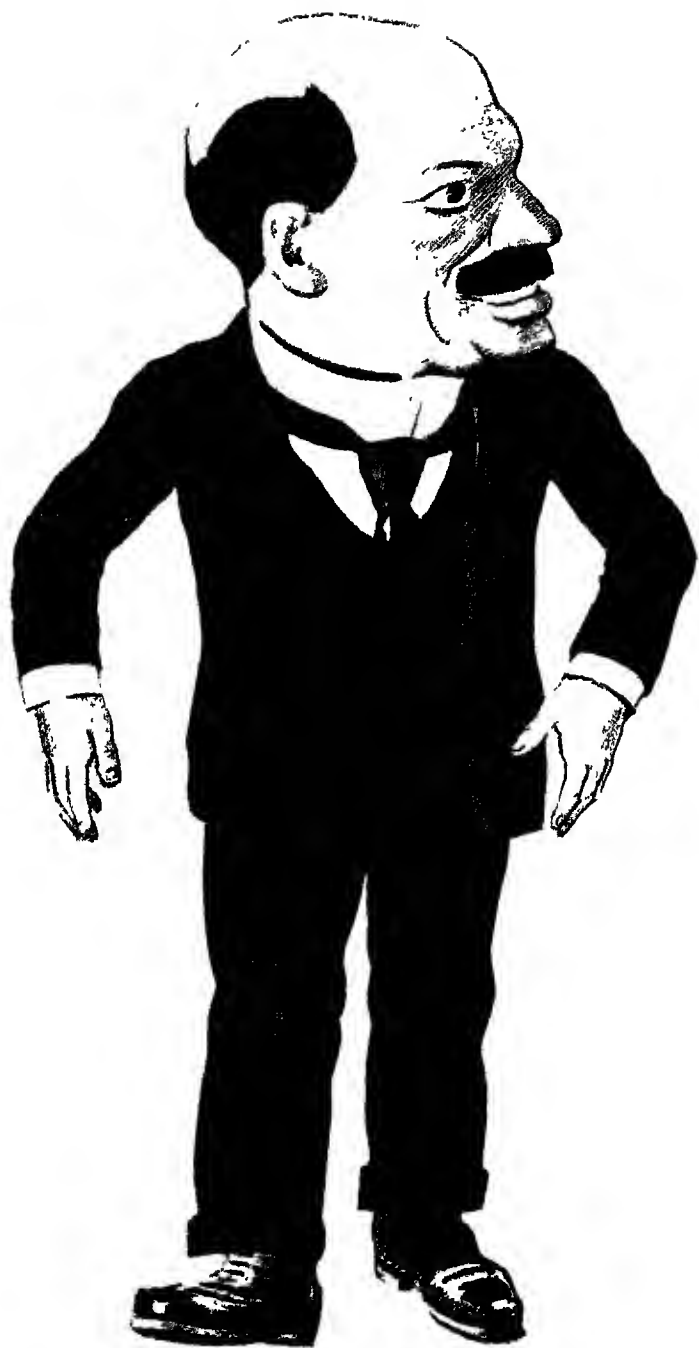
Smartt ranks as second in command of the Opposition in the Union Parliament, and sometimes it pleases the young bloods of Nationalism to point to him as the real leader of the South African Party. He does not, however, aspire to that position, and indeed he lives too much in the spirit of the older Cape he knew so well to be exactly fitted for it. Besides, though a great fighter when roused on some Imperial issue, he is temperamentally rather easy-going and lenient, which are not the best attributes for a man who is expected to wear down a Government. Gladstone once told a friend: "Unless a man has a considerable gift of taking things as they come, he may make up his mind that political life will be a sheer torment to him. He must meet fortune in all its moods." Smartt's buoyancy and his practice of "taking things as they come" have made him the Peter Pan of Cape politics, but they have, perhaps, robbed him of the faculty of national leadership. His oratory, easy and natural as it is, suffers somewhat from the same cause. Save on the most vital issues it hardly strikes a sufficiently deep note. In the chaffing speech and the jest across the floor he excels, but when he adopts a graver tone he is inclined to over do it and become melodramatic. Colvin declares in his *Life of Jameson* that when Smartt was soaring in one of his sublimest flights Jameson would quietly and continuously interrupt *sotto voce* with: "Oh, for God's sake stop it, Smartt! Dry up and sit down."

But with all his occasional stage thunder in the House and on the platform, he makes no enemies. He is a loyal friend and a generous foe, and his political critics have to go back twenty years to find ammunition for their attacks. He holds his political faith without a shadow of doubt, and in it he moves on cheerily and easily from year to year. A better politician than a statesman, he is a still better man than both.



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W. H. - 1928

## **The Rt. Hon. F. S. MALAN, P.C.**

If Democracy is to outlive its inherent weaknesses, the science of government will have to be placed in the hands of specially trained or experienced men. Such is the conclusion arrived at by many students of present day tendencies; yet, were the test applied at once, the percentage of active politicians able to comply with it would be small.

But the Rt. Hon. F. S. Malan, member of the Union Senate, and three times Acting Prime Minister of South Africa, would stand high on the list of men regarded as competent to control the State. To ability he has added training and experience, and were it not for what an American State Governor called the "unusual share of ingratitude" that characterises public life, he would not to-day be temporarily becalmed in the back water of a Second Chamber. He may lack the spark of genius which distinguishes the heaven-sent leader of men; but he has in large measure the attributes of capacity, commonsense and loyalty that carry the hard worker far. A short-memored public in a fast-moving country has forgotten much that he did, but he is still young enough to plan a second edition of his political career should the opportunity present itself. W. T. Stead many years ago predicted that F. S. Malan was destined to become Prime Minister of South Africa. There is still time, even now.

Francois Stephanus Malan, born on March 12, 1871, on a Western Province farm, is of pure Huguenot descent on both sides, and can trace his ancestry back to the Jacques Malan who landed on the shores of Table Bay in 1689. His father was one of those thrifty hard-headed Boer farmers who in

the mid-Victorian era in the Cape made sacrifices to give their children a better start in life than they themselves had had. It was from his father that he received his first education, and when he was able to go to school it was his father who superintended his studies. His father, too, was a keen politician and was instrumental in forming a debating society at whose meetings "Fransie," like Sir Edward Clarke in England, acquired in his youth the ambition to enter public life. His university career in the Cape was successful and he won his LL.B. at Cambridge in the same year as one Jan Christiaan Smuts, also from the Western Province. The association of the student days was to be renewed in politics.

Spurred on by the proud family in the Cape, he set himself seriously to the task of training himself for a useful career. He toured the United States and Canada when still a student. He went to France to study viticulture and French, and recorded his experiences in a little book. In 1895 he returned to Cape and set up in practice as a barrister. Those were the sunny days in Cape politics. The figure of the earlier Rhodes still filled the land, and racialism was almost unknown. But the end of that pleasant period was at hand, and even as Fransie Malan renewed his acquaintance with the Cape there suddenly appeared the writing on the wall.

The law, however, was destined to play only a small part in his career. Hardly had he begun his life in chambers when the Raid threw South African politics into the melting pot. As a boy he had imbibed the strong Afrikanerism which permeated the atmosphere of his home. Even when he was a boy at school the Dutch language could not be used in the Cape Parliament, and Ackerman, the Dutch member for Albert, unable to address the House in English, was forced to sit silent. What he regarded as the challenge of Rhodes behind the Raid intensified young Malan's Afrikaner feelings, and he enlisted under the banner of Jan Hofmeyr.

Like so many youthful barristers he had dabbled in newspaper work. The editorship of "Ons Land," a Bond organ, became vacant, and at the age of 24 he was chosen to fill it.

Journalism, as a Frenchman said, will take you anywhere if you leave it in time. Malan remained in it for some years, but spiritually he soon left it. He was always a politician first, and a journalist second. It was his stout Afrikaner politics that made his paper a success. It became the accepted channel of the views of the Bond. Its editor was an active member of that organisation, and was greeted as "the exponent of Dutch nationalism in the Cape."

As a Bondsman he was returned unopposed for the Malmesbury division, but he had scarcely been elected when under Martial Law he was sent to prison for a year because in his absence, and contrary to his instructions, his paper printed a letter mentioning the name of General French. The place of his incarceration was recorded in the family when his daughter was christened "Tokai." Thus it was not until 1902 that he was able to make his maiden speech in the Cape Assembly. When at last he did speak in Parliament the member who followed him with another maiden speech was Dr. Jameson.

The times were strenuous and bitter. Then it was that Ian Colvin wrote of him as "darkly brooding Malan," and the Milnerites included him among those they accused of making "inflammatory speeches" and of organising "a carnival of mendacity." In South Africa, as elsewhere, politics in war time were distinctly full-blooded. Jan Hofmeyr was of course the Elijah of the Bond. But Malan, who in his vigorous public life was indeed "plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth," became recognised as the political Elisha, the son of Shaphat.

Malan felt strongly in that troubled period, but he was not a narrow fanatic. When the skies cleared he perceived



that the brightest hope for the future lay in union, and into the movement he went with pen and tongue. As early as 1904 he delivered a lecture in Cape Town in which he urged that the destiny of the country had to be looked for in the establishment of a "free and united South Africa under the Union Jack." He it was who moved the resolution in favour of a united South Africa in the Cape Legislative Assembly. A member of Merriman's last Cape Ministry, he was a delegate at the National Convention, and when the great cause was won he held a portfolio in every Union Ministry from 1910 to 1924.

He proved himself to be a broadminded, progressive and hard-working Minister. His main interests were agriculture and education. When Minister of Agriculture in the Cape he had established the Grootfontein Agricultural College at Middleburg, personally choosing the site. As Minister of Education in the Union Government he smoothed over the school trouble in the Free State, and solved the complicated higher education problem for the whole Union. In one Cabinet re-shuffle he found himself holding the portfolio of Mines and he gave the Union its first measure bringing some relief to the victims of miner's phthisis. He was at the head of Mines at the time of the fierce Rand strikes of 1913 and 1914, and his experience convinced him of the necessity for a policy of consultation between employers and employed. It was he, too, who founded the Department of Industries which developed so rapidly in later years.

In these years of reconstruction, first in the Cape and then in the Union, which form perhaps the most important period of equal length in the history of South Africa, he played an important part. But, while his Afrikanerism had broadened into South-Africanism, he was still the staunch champion of the Dutch, and when Onze Jan died the mantle of the leader of the Bond fell upon his shoulders.

But there came a day when broadness of mind was an offence, and a narrow racialism was regarded as the only true faith. In the great Dutch schism he had remained loyal to Botha and Smuts, and thus incurred the hostility of the Hertzogites. Having served Malmesbury faithfully for 24 years, he was rewarded in 1924 by being beaten by 193 votes by a local National Party lawyer whose only obvious superiority in Parliament has been a capacity for slumbering rivalling that of the famous Lord North and the old Duke of Devonshire. Public life has indeed "an unusual share of ingratitude."

As journalist, politician, and administrator, he has an honourable record in South African life. An admirable speaker in both official languages he is a valuable asset to his party both in Parliament and on the platform. In his books and the press he has served well the cause of his mother tongue, and has helped to build up its literature. In administration he has been far-sighted, with, however, that leaven of caution that prevents extravagance. In political leadership he has been "rich in saving common-sense," accessible, sympathetic and painstaking. Often he has been a strong fighter, especially for his own race, but there is no bitterness in his nature. To a new generation he is "Oom Fransie" now, instead of the "Fransie" of years ago, but he has a young heart, strong vitality, and all the eagerness and the untiring activity of his earlier years. He has greatly strengthened his party in the Senate, but one cannot yet accept his retirement to that leisured spot as more than a temporary one.

"Oom Fransie" is the Elisha of the Bond, and the scriptural parallel may go further. The political children who have cried "Go up, thou bald-head" may yet be discomfited.



*THE HON.*  
*J. W. JAGGER.*



## **The Hon. J. W. JAGGER.**

Sometimes in politics one finds a lion in a den of Daniels.

Such an one is John William Jagger in the Union House of Assembly. He is a fierce Free Trader raging in a Chamber of calm and smug but unshakably convinced Protectionists. He rasps out the austere principles of Gladstonian finance to easy-going men who like the State to spend with a liberal hand. Of all the disciples of the historic Manchester school of thought he alone remains, unrepentant and unashamed. When he preaches the old faith of Bentham and Cobden in Parliament, he is in a minority of one. A few may follow him nervously at a very respectful distance, but when the acid test of a division comes they are like Peter in the palace of the High Priest.

The Protectionists boast of all the virtues, and numbers are with them. But Mr. Jagger says what he thinks regardless of everybody. He never has bothered much about what others think, being firmly convinced that his own ideas are right. He knows where he wants to go, and he strides along in far too much of a hurry to worry over the people who flit across his path. That is why he is "Jaggers" as well as John William Jagger—"Jaggers" being one of the great wholesale houses of the sub-continent. He once tried to convert a Cabinet into a sort of governmental "Jaggers"; but the age of miracles had passed, and he experienced his only failure in life.

A remarkable man this John William Jagger, merchant prince, ex-Minister, economist, farmer, statesman, manufacturer, and politician in spite of himself. He is of the breed

of Henry Ford, and William Lever, and Andrew Carnegie—one of those ultra-successful men of whom people in the rut mumble something about “luck.” But there has been no luck in his career, and no secret either beyond the possession of the traditional three C’s—Character, Capacity and Courage.

Huxley once said of Gladstone that had he begun life ploughing the soil with only a shirt to his back, nothing could have prevented him becoming Prime Minister of England. John William Jagger is that kind of man. He was born without a silver spoon in his mouth, and no fairy godmother smoothed his early path, but he had within himself all that was necessary for success.

Born at Northowram in Yorkshire in 1859 he received only the equipment of the provincial grammar school education of the mid-Victorian era. He left the schoolroom early to become a Bradford apprentice at a few shillings a week. To Yorkshire shrewdness and thrift he added immense vitality and an ever-driving ambition. At twenty-one he shook the mud of England from his feet and started off for South Africa in search of fortune. He strode into Cape Town in a hurry, and became a commercial traveller for a soft goods firm. The Colony was poor and depressed then, and business ambled along very gently, not interfering unduly with the rather crude amusements of the period. The commercial travellers certainly did not force the pace, and looked with dislike upon new-fangled ways disturbing traditional methods.

But Jagger was no ordinary knight of the road. Tall, lank, hungry-looking, eager, moved by a consuming fire of energy, the social amenities of those old days were not for him. What others thought of him did not trouble his mind. He talked more business and booked more orders than anybody else. His progress was like a page from Dr. Smiles.

At the end of three years he decided he could not spend his life selling soft goods for other people. So he sold them for himself. He joined forces with a partner, and the new firm hired one room in a humble building in Adderley Street, and engaged a staff of one. It was a small venture; but at its head was a man of clear vision, and prompt action, and untiring energy, which are often worth more than globular capital. Jagger, too, had not talked and studied Cape business in vain. He saw that better times were coming. Trade was just beginning to revive after a long period of depression. The Rand had not yet come into being to put fresh life into the sub-continent, but the gold discoveries further north were giving a new impetus to commerce. On the crest of the wave rode J. W. Jagger & Co. In three years the firm moved into larger premises. Expansion followed in a flood as South Africa entered upon a boom period. The one room grew into twenty-one departments. Branches were opened all over the country. Factories were established. The fortune was made.

But a man of Jagger's vitality cannot live by commerce alone. He threw himself into the public affairs of the country. Having galvanised moribund commercial organisation into life, he entered a wider field, and a lethargic community found itself goaded by an economist, an educationist, a statistician, a scourger of spendthrift politicians. There was only one thing to be done with such a man. The public did it. In 1903 it sent him into the Cape Parliament, and his superabundant energy found some outlet by placing six public Acts of his own devising upon the Statute Book in less than four years.

He has spent a quarter of a century in Parliament, and always he has been the self-appointed watchdog of the public's financial interests. Forty years ago John X.



Merriman writing to Lord Goschen added the following note to his letter:

"P.S.—It may interest you to know that we are gradually impoverishing ourselves by a Customs Tariff equal to 25 per cent. of our gross imports."

Holding the same view Jagger conducted a weekly Day of Judgment in Cape politics. He was out for Free Trade and economy all the time, and if his advice fell mainly upon deaf ears he never tired of reiterating his message. Though a member of Jameson's party in the Cape Parliament he was a fierce critic of Jameson's Treasurer, Sir Edgar Walton, and never hesitated to vote against his own side. He has never been "a good party man," preferring to have a mind of his own.

Sent to the National Convention to aid in forming the Union, he fought for a modest Ministry of seven or eight members, as opposed to the ten that Smuts eventually secured. Returned to the first Union Parliament he became the terror of Treasurers, upon whom he put down a barrage of statistics which, if not widely understood, had at any rate an alarming appearance. Sometimes too his criticism aroused resentment. Early in 1912 he launched a tremendous indictment against the Government for its party and racial appointments and declared that General Hertzog's Department of Justice "reeked to-day of racialism, nepotism and jobbery." Angered by the attack General Smuts retorted: "I say God help this country, and God help the Dutchmen of this country, if the hon. member for Cape Town acquires a position of influence over the public service of this country." Nine years later Smuts gave Jagger a seat in his Cabinet! So South African politics do improve from a racial point of view, whatever may be said to the contrary.

In those days, however, hot winds blew across the House, and when Jagger moved a famous resolution declaring that

the centralisation carried out by the Government was excessive and against the spirit of the Act of Union, twenty members on the Government side stalked out of the Chamber in a body as a protest against his earlier speeches. But that spirit also passed away in due season.

The public did not always get—and never will get—Jagger's point of view aright, for he once complained that he "has never been correctly reported." He never will be. His speeches are a torrent of disjointed assertions flowing over a rocky bed of statistics. He begins his next sentence before he has finished the last but one, and tries to make good the loss of half a proposition by repeating the other half of it twice. A professor of elocution once took him in hand, but fled after two lessons, and so the verbal cataract flows on ill-controlled.

It was after eighteen years in Parliaments that Jagger found himself a Cabinet Minister. Post-war depression was gripping South Africa. The Railways had an accumulated deficit of over £4,000,000, and it looked like growing larger. So in his 1921 Ministry, Smuts gave the portfolio of Railways to the arch-economist at the Cape. Jagger took one rapid glance at the Railway balance-sheet and metaphorically rolled up his shirt sleeves. To this day Curzon's "razor" is a sort of bogey used in India for the frightening of careless and extravagant officials. But what Curzon did with his razor was a mere trivial whittling compared with the execution wrought by Jagger's axe. He retrenched. He scrapped. He cancelled orders. He tore estimates to shreds. He lengthened working hours. In finance he was Charles Martel, and Tamerlane, and Attila rolled into one. Deputations fled without putting their case. Officialdom trembled outside his door. Thirty thousand white railway employees gnashed their teeth in helpless rage. The accounts were

balanced. It was magnificent; but it was not politics. Jagger saved the Railways and killed the Smuts Government.

After half a century of strenuous work he has still the vitality of a Gladstone, or a Balfour. Long nights in Parliament neither weaken his springing stride nor reduce the volcanic energy of his oratory. He reads more Blue Books and adds up more figures than any one in the House, and woe betide the Minister who delays the publication of a report, or tries to slip a measure through Parliament without the mass of information Jagger demands. He directs "Jaggers" when not in the House, and as hobbies for his spare time runs an 8,000 acre estate, breeds prize cattle, grows fruit, controls half a dozen factories, and delivers addresses on economics and finance.

He never waters down his political message in order to win popularity, which is something he has never desired. Thomas Boydell, Minister of Labour, once heard him tell a trade union deputation that he was very pleased to hear that his firm was only paying 2s. 6d. an hour to certain fitters, instead of the standard rate of 3s. 5d. "Why should I pay a man 3s. 5d. per hour if he is willing to work for 2s. 6d.?" he demanded. He would maintain that principle in Moscow, for he is firmly convinced he is right, and is also a man of great moral courage. He once lectured an audience of European miners and mechanics on the Rand on the theme that coloured men and natives must rank industrially and politically with white men—and got away alive. He has expounded the virtues of retrenchment in the face of the retrenched, and preached to high-wage Labourites the gospel that all pay must be based upon production alone. By straightforwardness and courage he has won the respect of those who repudiate his theories and "detest his practice. He would perish politically before he denied what he holds to be an economic truth; and he resigned his seat in the

Cabinet rather than even seem to give countenance to an industrial policy with which he disagreed. A vigorous masterful man, he still stands up single-handed against tenets which do violence to his economic faith.

Nor has his work been without value. There are times when every country needs a Jagger. But no democratic electorate will keep one in power for long. John William Jagger will never serve in another Union Cabinet. Which also troubles him not at all.



*THE HON.*  
*PATRICK DUNCAN, K.C.*



## **The Hon. PATRICK DUNCAN, K.C.**

Somebody has said that a lawyer is generally an arid figure in politics. There are exceptions, of course. But you could hardly expect to find among them a man who, in addition to being a lawyer is also a Scotsman, a Balliol man, and an ex-English civil servant. Such a fourfold combination almost inevitably produces administrative efficiency, practical common sense and sound judgment, but it does not evolve that touch of fanaticism or mysticism which seems to be necessary in the composition of great leaders of men.

Patrick Duncan has all the advantages of such a four-fold combination—indeed, one may say five-fold, because he has the additional virtue (and the additional handicap) of being one of Milner's men.

Born on a farm at Fortrie, Banffshire, in 1870 he was educated at Edinburgh, and when nineteen entered Balliol College, Oxford. Neither educational centre turns out sentimentalists or dreamers. Balliol, according to A. G. Gardiner, "has produced the finest mental machines of this generation, but they are sometimes cold and cheerless." Among other distinctions Duncan won the Craven scholarship, but his Oxford record revealed little beyond ability and a capacity for persistent work. "Much may be made of a Scotsman if he be caught young," declared Dr. Johnson. The higher branches of the Civil Service caught Patrick Duncan young, and though they made much of him, they left upon him a stamp of officialdom which twenty years of other activities have failed to efface. When twenty-three he



entered the Inland Revenue Department at Somerset House, London, which again is a training ground developing the practical, rather than the imaginative, in man.

He mounted the first rung of the ladder of success when he was chosen as private secretary to Alfred Milner. He proved to be a young man after Milner's own heart—silent, undemonstrative, a glutton for work, the very embodiment of administrative efficiency. It was excellent training, though perhaps not the most useful foundation for a political career in any ultra-democratic country. Milner, also, was rather arid.

Fate brought Milner to South Africa, and when the task of reconstruction had to be taken in hand he sent for his reticent private secretary and made him Treasurer of the Crown Colony of the Transvaal. "Pat" Duncan stood top in that famous Kindergarten, the members of which were roundly abused but have since confounded their critics by winning distinction in after life. He was one of the cogs in a machine which even those who disliked it admitted in their hearts worked with wonderful speed, irritating smoothness, and complete certainty.

The England of those days still retained something of the faith that it was predestined to administer the affairs of less competent peoples. Its universities produced earnest and eager young men, anxious to act as official receivers in bankrupt national concerns oversea. Something of the governmental missionary fire burned in Patrick Duncan as in the other members of the Kindergarten, and he entered upon his new task with zest.

For six years he laboured as Colonial Treasurer or Colonial Secretary in the Transvaal—sometimes as both. He looked extremely young for his job—"Milner's Men" were all young—but he did it well. It was constructive work, and suited his temperament. A new earth had to be created, even if

a new heaven proved unattainable. It meant re-building from the very foundations upward, and Duncan did his share admirably. He produced Budgets with surpluses, served on various Colonial and Intercolonial bodies, and was, indeed, one of the mainstays of the Milner regime. His ways were not the ways of the older population, but they never questioned his integrity or doubted his desire to be fairminded.

"Milner's Men" no doubt, governed well; but that is not everything. "The great purpose of democracy," said Bernard Shaw, "is to prevent your being governed better than you want to be governed." South Africans who were prepared to be less well governed, as long as they governed themselves, grew restless under the Kindergarten. At last Crown rule vanished in a night, and self-government sprang into being, full-grown and eager. Duncan relinquished his task as unobtrusively as he had entered upon it. Declining even the pension to which he was entitled, he prepared in his methodical way

To meet the changes Time and Chance present  
With modest dignity and calm content.

He retired to England, but after being called to the Bar decided to return to the land in which he felt his life's work lay. In Johannesburg he settled down to the law, lightened by politics, and gradually politics began more and more to crowd out law. He became a member of the Progressive, afterwards the Unionist Party, under "Dr. Jim," but his activities were not confined to the Transvaal, and by his literary association with "The State," and in other ways, he helped to lay the foundation of a united South Africa.

It was the establishment of the Union that sent him deeper into politics. At the first Union general election, he led what seemed to be a Unionist forlorn hope into the

Labour-cum-Dutch constituency of Fordsburg, and to the surprise of friends and foes alike beat Dr. Krause by 46 votes, a Labour candidate running third. For another ten years he held that rather "rough and tumble" part of Johannesburg, and probably no other Unionist could have done it. He was a loyal party man, but he marched ahead of his colleagues. Upon social problems he held what were regarded by his party as advanced views, and his advocacy of a white labour policy roused suspicion among the mining section of his side. Progressive ideas on miners' phthisis, and industrial and wage problems, and sympathy with the claims of women workers and the needs of the children, made him many friends in Fordsburg, which was not really a Unionist constituency, and has never been one since he was beaten there in 1920.

When Fordsburg at last deserted him, he found a safe seat in Yeoville. For a decade he sat on the Opposition side of the House, and his influence both on the Government and his own party was considerable. He strove to broaden and modernise the ideas of both, for both were inclined to lag behind in the matter of social and industrial reform.

The merging of his party into Smuts's South African Party gave him more scope. One of the three Unionists taken into the Smuts Government of 1921, he was entrusted with the portfolios of the Interior, Education and Public Health. Training and temperament made him a good, but not a popular, minister. He knew too much about civil servants to be the idol of the public service, while as a minister he was handicapped like Asquith, another Balliol man, by "apparent chill of the spirit." With him his job came first, which is apt to be a drawback to popular success in South African politics.

There was no outstanding feature in his three years in office. Indeed, he could do little more than mark time. The

post-war slump, and a great industrial upheaval, thrust the Government more and more into drastic economy. A minister deemed himself lucky if he could keep things going without causing a row. Few members of the Cabinet managed to do even that, but Duncan was one of them. He was back on the Opposition front bench in 1924, where he remains an effective, because moderate-minded, critic of the Hertzog Government.

He is a sound South African with a very real sympathy for the older population of his adopted country. Whatever Imperialistic ideas influenced his youth have softened in the course of years. He is a cautious and level-headed statesman. Were he a little less cautious and level-headed he would hold a more prominent place in public life. He has not the faculty of ready self-expression, never attempts to make a popular appeal, and does not cultivate a "good press." If he has nothing to say, he remains silent, and "talking to Buncombe" has no place in his oratory. He does not play upon the foibles and prejudices of the people, and probably could not if he would. Straightforward and honest in his politics, principles are to him principles, and though he recognises the necessity for team work in public life he does not easily modify his attitude. An ability to see the other side of a case, and sometimes appreciate it, prevents his being a party fanatic. He holds clear-cut views and expresses them, but he does not question the honesty of those who disagree with him. In appeals to passion he can be outmanœuvred. In arguments upon facts he is rarely worsted, for no man studies his case with greater care, and his judgment is usually dispassionate and sound.

But there have been times when the fierce party man has been inclined to send to him the message to the Church of the Laodiceans: "Thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot."

His weakness in politics is that he has no weakness. He is too reticent, too self-contained, and has too much of the cold efficiency of a machine, to stir the crowd. The great popular leader always inspires both affection and hatred. "Pat" Duncan inspires respect. He is of the type of Goschen, and Asquith, and Edward Grey, whose appeal is to the head rather than to the heart.

*THE HON.*

*N. J. DE WET, K.C.*



Shup - 12-20

## **The Hon. N. J. DE WET, K.C.**

In theory the bi-cameral system has no lack of supporters, yet praise is seldom bestowed upon a Second Chamber actually in being. Somebody said that the cure for admiring the House of Lords is to go and look at it; and it is a dictum applicable to upper legislative bodies generally.

Yet upon occasion the Senate of the Union of South Africa can attain a high standard of debate, and it usually does so when Senator N. J. de Wet is taking a prominent part in a discussion. Leader of the South African Party Opposition upon its scarlet benches, he would hold an honoured place in any legislative body. It is, indeed, a matter for regret that his outstanding talents are confined within the narrow compass of an Upper House.

Politics in South Africa often runs in families. Nicolaas Jacobus de Wet, born on September 11, 1873, is the son of a farmer in the Aliwal North district of the Cape, who was himself a Divisional Councillor at 26, a member of the old Cape Upper House at 46, and when nearing sixty was again sent to Parliament. The lad inherited his father's keen interest in public affairs, and had he concentrated on politics would have gone further than he has. But politics had a strong rival in the law, and it may be as a lawyer rather than as a politician that he will ultimately be best remembered.

An education begun at Aliwal North and continued at Stellenbosch was completed at Cambridge, where he took his LL.B. degree at the age of 22. A year later he was admitted as an advocate of the Supreme Court of the Cape



of Good Hope. Opportunity opened its door most widely in the North, and like many another ambitious young Cape lawyer he sought fame and fortune in the Transvaal. He practised as a barrister in the Republic until the Anglo-Boer War.

Like so many of the younger Cape Dutch of the nineties of last century, he had been driven towards the Kruger party by the Jameson Raid and the racial bitterness that preceded the war. Under the influence of this reaction he had become a burgher of the Republic, and he joined its forces when hostilities began. He went into the field as a legal adviser, and before long became Military Secretary to Commandant-General Louis Botha.

After the Peace of Vereeniging he resumed his practice at the Bar in Pretoria, and, though competition in those days was particularly keen, he rapidly made his way to the front. He could not, however, resist the appeal of politics, and when Louis Botha formed his party known as *Het Volk*, just before the grant of Responsible Government, Nicolaas Jacobus de Wet joined his old military chief and marched forward with him into a new conflict in which what was lost on the battlefield was regained in the polling booths.

He was elected by Middelburg West to the Transvaal Parliament of 1908, and sat in it during the years his father was a member of the last Cape Legislature before Union.

When the National Convention was summoned, he acted as legal adviser to the Transvaal delegates. In 1910 he was sent to the first Union House of Assembly by Wakkerstroom. The Botha Cabinet was weakened by internal troubles, and more than one re-shuffle was necessary. After the death of Sauer in 1913, De Wet was brought into the Government as Minister of Justice, thus taking over the portfolio of the man whom his father had followed for many years in Cape politics.

He was only forty when he attained Cabinet rank, but he had established a high reputation for eloquence and sound legal knowledge. His first experience of ministerial work provided a severe test of his capacity. Social and industrial unrest had swept the country and bred widespread strikes, which ended in July 1913 in street fighting with a British cavalry regiment outside the Rand Club in Johannesburg, and the deportation without trial of nine strike leaders. The aftermath of this upheaval, and of a second strike early in 1914, provoked long debates and bitter scenes in the 1914 session of Parliament. An Indemnity and Undesirables Deportation Bill was necessary, and it was fought line by line by the small Labour Party under Colonel Creswell. The debates in the Assembly alone occupied 134 hours, 102 hours of which were filled by the six or seven Labourites. The second reading debate ran into 12 sittings, and in the Committee stage one sitting lasted for 17 hours and a second for 26 hours. Smuts was in charge of the troublesome measure, but De Wet rendered him valuable assistance in getting it through Parliament.

He also piloted through the House the Riotous Assemblies and Criminal Law Amendment Bill of 1914, which provided for the establishment of a special tribunal and punishment by deportation in certain cases. Several other measures reforming the civil and criminal law followed. They were planned upon modern and human lines, and revealed broad sympathies and an admirable grasp of South Africa's special needs. He tried to reduce the trapping system to a minimum, and generally to prevent crime and reform criminals rather than merely to inflict punishment.

The necessary consolidation of laws after Union gave him ample scope for work. The task was one which appealed to him, and but for the Great War and the troubles it bred he would have gone farther than he did. Despite interrup-

tions, however, his eight years as Minister of Justice were marked by some valuable legislation.

He was Chairman of the Commission appointed to report on the future government of South West Africa. Defeated in his constituency, he was sent to the Union Senate in 1921 and has sat there ever since. If his outstanding ability has been somewhat lost in the Upper House, its calm atmosphere suits his temperament. With nothing of the demagogue in him, he makes, perhaps, a limited appeal to popular audiences. He is a master of clear exposition, and his utterances are models of businesslike explanation, and while eloquent are never long-drawn. His utterances in opposition to the Government's State Iron and Steel scheme, and to certain clauses in the diamond legislation of 1927-28, were noteworthy for concise argument and vigorous phrasing.

As a rule he prefers to deal with the legal aspect of a measure, but if necessary can make an admirable speech on general issues. Perfectly bilingual, he is an orator in both official languages. His manner is pleasant, his voice good, and he can put a case so convincingly that whichever side he takes seems for the moment at least to be right. A good party man without being fanatical, he wins the esteem and respect of his opponents. Yet, although he has been a success in politics and has had a seat in both Houses, he always seems to be a lawyer by preference, and a politician in spite of himself.

## **The Hon. H. BURTON, K.C.**

Henry Burton has sat in South African Parliaments for 22 years, and served in six Governments, and held Cabinet rank for 16 years, and yet he is not much over 60, which Poultney Bigelow declared is the age at which a man first becomes of really sound judgment.

It is a noteworthy record for one who had to overcome a great obstacle to success in public life. He has triumphed in spite of himself. Lord Rosebery once wrote that fascination of manner was an invaluable endowment for a politician. Burton did not merely not possess that fascination. He had been cursed by an overbearing and irritating manner which has made antagonists as rapidly as his outstanding ability has bred admirers.

Henry Burton was born in 1866 at Cape Town and was educated at St. Andrew's College, Grahamstown. At the age of 26 he was admitted to practice as a barrister and settled at Kimberley, where his marked ability won him the valuable patronage of De Beers, and he became the leader of the Bar. The highest positions in his profession might have been his, but the magnet of politics drew him away from the Law. The troubled years from the Raid to the Peace had developed in him an ardent Afrikanerism. Joining the Bond, he entered the Cape Parliament in 1902 as a disciple of "Onze Jan" and a special friend of Sauer, and for thirteen years he represented the same constituency.

There raged in the Cape, when he took his seat in the old Cape Assembly, the tumult which sprang from the Boer War. Henry Burton stood up for the rights of the Dutch as fiercely as Lloyd George at the same age fought for the

claims of the Welsh. The rights were mainly wrongs in that period, and the new member found plenty of material for his caustic tongue. Of those years Sir James Molteno subsequently wrote: "There are three men now, better qualified than myself, who can write the history of the treason trials and doings under martial law. The names of the men in my mind are Gysbert Reitz Hofmeyr, Henry Burton, and Dr. Leipoldt."

In Parliament Sir Gordon Sprigg could only allude rather feebly to Burton as "a very, very young member." He may have been young in parliamentary experience, but in his first year in the House he overthrew the Sprigg Ministry. He raised the vexed question of martial law and the payments made by the War Losses Commission, and moved that a court be set up to revise both the fines imposed on rebels and the compensation paid to farmers. Pressed to a division the motion was carried by a majority of 10 votes, and the Government resigned.

When in 1908 Merriman formed the last Cape Government he took Burton into it as Attorney-General. His ability in debate marked him out as a coming man.

Though he was not a member of the National Convention which led to the uniting of South Africa, he was recognised as a power in the politics of the newly-formed Union. He was a member of every Cabinet in the first fourteen years of the Union's history, not because he was a great administrator, but because he was a great Parliamentary orator with special facility in the rapid fire of debate. In the first Botha Cabinet he held the portfolio of Native Affairs, but there is no evidence that he studied it at all deeply, and indeed at that period the subject was quietly side-tracked, and that he even controlled the Department has been forgotten. But his handling of Railways and of Finance will not be forgotten for a long time. He was Minister of Rail-

ways throughout the Great War. He was Minister of Finance in the years following the Versailles Peace.

He was an indifferent minister in office, and a splendid one in Parliament. There never was a man who could defend more ably an unpopular policy. Many a political enemy, like Shimei, "went along the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dirt." But in debate they could not defeat him. His cleverness in beating back every assault was wonderful. An unpopular policy was forced upon him by the times. It was a period of great uncertainty, in which expenditure had to be kept down. He had always boasted of broad industrial sympathies, though his temperament was really conservative, but when it came to action he refused to make changes, and defended his delaying tactics with untiring resolution and marvellous skill. Yet he could have done what he did and roused less hostility, had he revealed even a modicum of tact. But Burton in his younger days was not improved by power. He developed an unfortunate domineering tone which irritated the railwaymen more than his refusal to make concessions or accept reforms. The word conciliation had dropped out of his vocabulary. In the end the Government became nervous. Mr. Burton was transferred to Finance.

Finance proved his worth and caused his downfall. The country ate Burton bread with hardly a murmur. It revolted against Burton taxation. But from the outset his task had been an impossible one. He took over a bankrupt Treasury in 1920. He was like the Chancellor whom Peel described as "seated on an empty chest by the side of bottomless deficiencies, fishing for a Budget." Revenue fell so fast that increasing taxation could not keep pace with it.

"I am afraid the Budget will shock the country," he remarked ruefully when introducing his 1921 financial

statement. It did. But the shock of the deficit was slight compared with the shock of Burton's subsequent remedial measures.

"Of all the qualities in public life, courage is the rarest" is one of Lloyd George's favourite sayings. There was the highest moral courage in Burton's handling of finance between 1921 and 1924. Even his engrained belief that he is always right could hardly have closed his eyes and ears to the ever-growing hostility he was creating in the outer world. But he strode on. And not apologetically. He fought for his policy as though he gloried in it, and defended it with all the fire of the fanatic and the skill of the trained legal mind.

He lived through a nightmare of retrenchment and increased taxation. He cut loan estimates—and departmental expenditure—and cost of living allowances—and income-tax exemption—and public service salaries. He doubled postage rates and match duties; thrust extra taxation on spirits, beer, estates and all manner of things; put an excise on tobacco; and enforced all over the Union a patent medicine tax which Mr. Hull had swept away in 1911 because it was irritating. Somebody said that the art of taxation lies in plucking the feathers from the goose with as little squealing as possible. Burton had no time to pick and choose. He tore out feathers by the handful. The squealing was deafening. To an Opposition long hungry in the wilderness it was as though political manna fell from Heaven. Every chemist's shop became a recruiting station for Hertzogites and Labourites.

But Burton set his teeth and stuck to his rough task. In the end he straightened out finance. But neither he, nor the Government of which he was a member, survived to reap the benefit of his work. He was the Great Disillusionist. And the public hated to be disillusioned.

His fate was that of the scapegoat mentioned in the sacrificial rites laid down in Leviticus. Like the goat Aaron was instructed to select by lot to bear all the iniquities of the people, Burton was sent away "into a land not inhabited . . . into the wilderness." The reward of his labours was rejection by Ladismith. No other constituency appeared to desire to be represented by him in Parliament. He vanished from political life, and for a long time never even made a political speech. Perhaps he was wise,

"For silence after grievous things is good."

Making enemies needlessly was always one of Burton's failings in Parliament. The Union's first Minister of Finance, H. C. Hull, once told him in the House that he would get on better if he "didn't cock his nose so much in the air." Mr. Oliver, of Kimberley, who often supported the Government of which Burton was a member, protested in the 1919 Budget debate that "he had been in the Cape House and the Union Parliament for fifteen years and during that time he had received the greatest courtesy from all the Ministers in the various Governments with one exception, and that exception was the Minister of Railways (Mr. Burton)" who, he added, "had a temperament which at any rate caused annoyance to others." The Labour members also carried on a constant war with him in which quarter was neither asked nor given.

Burton's manner was very much like that of President Harrison of the United States, of whom it was said that if he were to address an audience of 10,000 men he would capture them all, but if each one were presented to him in private he would make him his enemy.

But Burton in his ministerial days was a man who went his own way, and if ever he tried to change his manner he never succeeded in doing so. He was capable of causing



more ill-feeling by granting a request than General Smuts did by refusing one. Even when he went to the Imperial Conference of 1918, Sir Almeric Fitzroy, clerk to the Privy Council, wrote in his memoirs: "Mr. Burton, from South Africa, played the part of a somewhat querulous interrogator."

A good speaker anywhere, in either English or Afrikaans, Burton is best as a debater in Parliament. His clarity in exposition, his cleverness in retort, and his caustic tongue make him a valuable asset to any side, and a formidable opponent in discussion. He is indifferent, or even lazy, in minor matters, but when he concentrates on a subject he gets down to bedrock with great rapidity. Preparation is not, however, necessary for him. He can defend a case of which he knows nothing with a skill and a vigour which persuade his hearers that he has made a life-long study of it. A good party man at all times, he is a loyal colleague in a Government, and when pressed can get through an immense amount of work—which he dislikes as a rule. .

Even to-day he is still young enough and active enough to go back into Parliament and win his way to the top. He can still stand the strain of party politics. What is not quite so certain is whether party politics can stand the strain of Henry Burton.

## **The Hon. Sir THOMAS WATT.**

Politically the trouble with Natal is that it is too Natalian. That it is in the British Empire can never be doubted. That it is a part of the Union of South Africa is not always quite so obvious.

Its politicians are apt to be Natalians first, Britishers second, and South Africans third. They have always been an uncertain quantity in the Union Parliament. When Sir Starr Jameson went to Durban before the National Convention he wrote of the Natalians in a letter printed in Ian Colvin's brilliant biography:

"I find they are still of the pure grocer variety—ostensibly British, but really in Botha's pocket as the dispenser of good things. A miserable crowd who are not fit to run a town council, not to speak of Responsible Government."

The leader of the Unionists was irritated because he did not find in Natal the whole-hearted support for his cause that he looked for. And, as Halifax said: "Anger is never without an argument, but seldom with a good one." One turns almost instinctively to Halifax in defence of the politicians of Natal. There is in them a large measure of the spirit of the Great Trimmer. Even Sir Thomas Watt, who is Natal's leading representative in the Union Parliament, has been attacked as a Trimmer. Moderation and cautiousness often have an ill-look to the violent partisan. Sir Thomas is the personification of both—as indeed one would expect from his birth and upbringing. Emotionalism and fanaticism

are not usually the attributes of a man who is both a Scotsman and a lawyer.

Thomas Watt was born at Shawlands near Glasgow in 1857 and was educated in private schools in the district, and graduated at Glasgow University. He was trained for the legal profession and was admitted to the Scottish courts, but at the age of 26 migrated to Natal. Maritzburg first attracted him, and he joined the legal firm of which the late Sir Henry Bale was head, and became its managing clerk. Before he was thirty, however, he set up in practice on his own account at Durban, but a few years later removed to Dundee, which he made his permanent home. He was called to the Bar in 1885 and lightened the law with farming until the upheaval of the Anglo-Boer War disturbed his quiet life. Becoming an officer in the Imperial Light Horse, he was in command of the town guard at Newcastle at the time Botha menaced that little centre. By one of the many curious changes in South African life, he in later years found himself a member of the Government of the Boer General whose force threatened him.

Even before the coming of peace he was drawn into politics. Newcastle sent him into the Natal House of Assembly while the war still dragged on, and he was not long in showing himself to be a member of more than average ability. His quiet slow speech may not have provoked enthusiasm, but his able marshalling of facts, and his facility in putting a case clearly and convincingly, made him a formidable opponent. His manner might be dry and emotionless, but he was clearly a "safe" man, and one upon whom in the rather confused and personal Natal politics of that period reliance could be placed. Two or three years in Parliament sufficed for his apprenticeship, and then he held the portfolios of Justice and Education in two short-lived Cabinets.

But his best work was done in placing the defences of the colony on a sounder basis. He expanded the Cadet Corps and made it one of the most efficient in the Empire, and the formation of the Natal Militia was largely due to his efforts. He was a member of the Smythe Ministry of 1906 which resigned in a body as a protest against what was held to be the interference of the Imperial Government in regard to the execution of twelve rebels arising out of the Zulu rebellion.

He sat in the National Convention which brought about Union, and entered the first Union House of Assembly as one of the eleven Independents who trooped in from Natal. Watt did not long remain in that uncertain frame of mind. He was one of the little band of Natal Independents who crossed the floor to support the Botha Government, upon whom the Natal paper hurled the angry designations of "traitors," "renegades" and "rats." The storm was so fierce that he had to find a new constituency, which he did in Dundee. But it was plain that he was surveying the political field with the calm temperament and the far-seeing eye of a Halifax. "If there are two Parties," wrote that worthy, "a man ought to adhere to that which he disliketh least, though in the whole he doth not approve of it. For whilst he doth not list himself in one or the other Party, he is looked upon as such a Straggler that he is fallen upon by both." And after all Watt was only a little in advance of his time when he joined the Botha-Smuts party. Within a decade most of those who shrieked at him did exactly the same thing.

Having made his decision he stood loyally by his new friends, and they stood by him. Accepting the portfolios of Post and Telegraphs and Public Works in the reconstructed Botha Ministry of 1912 (when Hertzog was omitted) he had a seat in every Cabinet until the Smuts Government crashed

in 1924. As a rule he dealt with Public Health, the Interior and Public Works but for a brief period in 1920 he was Minister of Railways and Harbours.

He did solid work of the bureaucratic kind without attracting much attention, for he is not a politician who indulges in fireworks. Yet some troublesome tasks fell to his lot. In 1919 he tried to put through Parliament an Enemies Repatriation Bill which the Nationalists fought fiercely. By dint of an all-night sitting and the use of the closure he carried the second reading, and had the measure sent to a Select Committee. Subsequently the Nationalists returned to the attack and moved the adjournment of the House to discuss the hardships which the Bill would impose upon a number of people. Feeling against the measure grew rapidly, and in June the Acting Prime Minister (Mr. F. S. Malan) announced that the Government had decided not to go on with it. It was Watt, as Minister of Public Health, who had to fight the terrible "Spanish Influenza" epidemic of 1918 when tens of thousands of people died, the mortality among the natives and coloured people being appalling. In the light of the experience gained in this scourge he drafted his important Public Health Bill of 1919, a very far-reaching consolidating measure. He was also responsible for the Electoral Bill of 1916, and by painstaking application built up a good reputation for careful administration.

He was largely an office worker, and the rough and tumble of extra-mural politics had no attractions for him. While other members of the Cabinet were engaged in more spectacular tasks, he carried on much of their routine work, received innumerable deputations, and proved a very useful handyman in the Administration. He watched the activities of his departmental officials more closely than most ministers do, and many a man discovered that sound work had been appreciated in high places.

His moderation in politics has often been regarded in Natal as sheer opportunism, and a disposition to shout with the bigger crowd. His caution, which is, perhaps, sometimes carried to excess, has given him a reputation for lack of enterprise. But he is a sound and experienced Parliamentarian, and, though he is hardly likely to hold another portfolio, he has to his credit a variety of useful if not spectacular achievements.



## Col. the Hon. DENEYS REITZ.

In politics the public love the fighter. Perhaps because he is rare. As a race, politicians are apt to practise the art of compromise, and indulge in the wiles of expediency. Gladstone, whose whole outlook was bounded by politics, used to say that faintheartedness was the master vice. With thirty years of Parliamentary experience behind him, Morley declared that the crucial defect even in a superior kind of politician was "lack of fibre."

So in the political field, as in others, there is always something fascinating in the spectacle of a man battling ceaselessly against heavy odds, and refusing to be turned from his purpose either by personal abuse or early failure.

It is because he has always been a fighter that Deney's Reitz has gained his present place in South African politics. He always attacks. He never admits defeat. He never explains, or retracts, or utters excuses. He is quite willing to take heavy blows as long as he can give them; and then once more

Away he scours, and lays about him  
Resolved no fray should be without him.

Even the axiom that the duty of an Opposition is to oppose does not suffice him. With him the only duty of an Opposition is fierce denunciation.

Deney's Reitz is the third son of ex-President Reitz, the famous Orange Free Stater. His boyhood was spent in the happiest days of the little republic, when there was no racialism and everybody was content with the simple life. As a youngster he knew Paul Kruger well, and indeed his father's position as President of the O.F.S. from January



1889 to December 1895 and then as State Secretary in the Transvaal made him well acquainted with the politics and personalities of the time. His own political activities began in the old days in the Free State when he and his brothers used to ride out on ponies to summon members of the legislature to a new session.

When the storm of war broke over the Republic in 1899 he was a lad of seventeen attending the Grey College at Bloemfontein. Naturally he was a convinced Republican, and a fiery opponent of England. His fighting spirit was stirred by the conflict, and he threw his school books to the winds and went from the classroom into the field. In the early stages of the war he fought in Botha's army in Natal. Later he joined Jan Smuts in his dramatic dash into the Cape Colony, which was an expedition influencing his whole career. In the hardships of that historic raid there sprang up a friendship with his leader which was to effect important decisions in his later career. He accompanied Smuts to the peace negotiations at Vereeniging, but his young and fiery spirit would not take what was sufficient for his chief. He declined to accept the terms and exiled himself to Madagascar, which was not a pleasant island for an unattached white man seeking a living. There he battled against ill-fortune as doggedly as he had against the British Army. He rode transport across fever country on a diet consisting chiefly of rice; and only an iron constitution and a stout heart saved him from permanent breakdown.

At last letters from Smuts and other friends persuaded him that South Africa would get a fair deal under the new regime, and he returned to the land of his birth, but so enfeebled that a period of recuperation on Smuts's farm was necessary to restore his strength.

After a turn at journalism, he qualified as a lawyer, settled down to practice at Heilbron, and began to take a part in

public life. In due course the Hertzog schism split the South African Party, and his family subscribed to the new faith, as a member of which one of his brothers, Hjalmar, eventually entered Parliament. Dencys Reitz, however, remained true to Botha-Smuts party, for travel had broadened his outlook, and he perceived that his beloved ideal of republicanism could for all practical purposes be achieved under the British system of self-government as readily as under any other. He fought on the side of the Government in the 1914 Rebellion, and at the general election of the following year led a forlorn hope on its behalf into the Heilbron constituency and was badly defeated.

Then his fighting spirit found an outlet in the Great War. He took part in the campaign in German South West Africa, and commanded a regiment in German East Africa and shared in Smuts's triumph. Early in 1917 he went to France and rose to command a regular battalion of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, and led his men through the great Allied offensive, being severely wounded on two occasions.

Back in South Africa after the Peace of Versailles, he embarked upon another adventure in politics. As a Smuts man he opposed Dr. Colin Steyn in Bloemfontein South, and won the seat for the South African Party, and gained for himself a place in the 1920 Union House of Assembly. Another general election came in the following year, but the flowing tide of Hertzogism in the Free State swept him away, and his political career seemed to have ended.

But in politics a fighter is too useful a recruit to be neglected, and Colonel Reitz immediately made a surprising re-entry into politics as Cabinet Minister. His Parliamentary experience could be counted only in months. He was only 39. Yet he appeared in the 1921 Government as Minister of Lands. Smuts had intervened on behalf of his youthful follower. He persuaded Port Elizabeth Central to accept

him as its member when Sir Edgar Walton was sent to London as High Commissioner, and provided him with the portfolio of Lands. Of course, there were murmurings. Still, such unexpected transitions are not without precedent in politics. Lulu Harcourt was given a place in an English ministry before he had uttered a word in the House of Commons. Morley became Secretary for Ireland after less than three years in Parliament, and without having held any kind of office before. Lord Russell gave Goschen a seat in the Cabinet without consulting his colleagues.

And if there was astonishment Smuts's experiment bore the test of time. Colonel Reitz quickly revealed, not only a capacity for vigorous administration, but a broadmindedness with which his opponents had not credited him. "Lands" is a difficult department to administer in South Africa. It is invaded by a horde of suplicants advancing party claims, and accusations of favouritism are readily levelled against its political head. The young minister took up the task with the resolve to be impartial, and it was generally admitted that he succeeded. His administration was as sympathetic as the financial embarrassments of the period would permit, and when after three years of strenuous labour a change of government sent him on to the Opposition front bench instead of the ministerial seats, he could look back upon solid work well done.

In Parliament and on the platform Colonel Reitz is an effective, though rather rugged, speaker. He has no oratorical tricks. His efforts never smell of midnight oil, and indeed he is not given to careful preparation and is content with a few notes jotted down on the spur of the moment. His style is so conversational that it becomes a monotone. But every speech is a fighting speech—a fiercely launched offensive over a long front. "Send for the sledge-hammer," said a member of a Liberal Government in the House of Commons

when an occasion called for the heavy blows Sir William Harcourt was accustomed to strike. Colonel Deneys Reitz is the sledge-hammer of the Opposition in the Union Parliament. He always attacks. In a quiet level voice, marking off his points by stabbing the end of a pencil into the palm of his hand, he sends across the floor a flood of denunciation and invective. His facility for choosing words that sting is remarkable. His tone is unemotional, but he seems determined that

*Each line shall stab, shall blast, like daggers and like fire.*

Inclined to act on Dr. Johnson's principle that to treat your adversary with respect is to give him an advantage to which he is not entitled, he both hurts and rouses tempers. More than once the Nationalists have risen in a body and left the Chamber rather than face the stream of oratorical lava flowing toward them. Colonel Reitz, pugnacious and aggressive, is careless of the irritation he excites. When he fights he puts his heart into the business, and if bitter replies hurtle through the air he gives as good as he takes.

His outlook is purely South African, but his South Africanism is broad enough to embrace both white races and is not understood by the fierce racial partisan. A traveller and explorer, as well as a politician, he knows most of Southern Africa thoroughly, and his wide experience directs his fiercest attacks against the narrowness of mind which is one of the curses of South African politics. He flays the foe, but he makes no converts, and he is less effective in defence than in attack.



## **The Hon. W. B. MADELEY.**

All politicians love a mystery. When there is none available they will often invent one. They did so in 1925 when Walter Madeley was suddenly translated from the Labour back benches to the Cabinet, and persisted in seeing in his promotion some baffling portent of strange events to come.

The spectacle of the very high priest of Socialistic extremism, and a man who boasts that his only flag is the Red Flag, sitting in a Government cheek by jowl with conservatives like Mr. Havenga and Dr. Malan was certainly curious. But in politics there is rarely anything really mysterious about such associations. The explanation in this particular case was simple. Coalition is the mother of expediency. A political Pact and a good deal of party intrigue raised Walter Madeley above his fellows. It was no mystery. It was a political bargain. Labour had been promised three seats in the Pact Cabinet. Madeley secured the third one.

Nor has there ever been any mystery about Madeley personally. He is as obvious as the plot of an American film. Walter Bayley Madeley was born at Woolwich in 1873. His father was in the Army, and at the age of seven Walter was shipped to India and received his education at the Cathedral School at Bombay. Returning to England when sixteen, he was apprenticed at Woolwich Arsenal, and at the age of 23, having served his full seven years and become a journeyman fitter, he set out for South Africa. Two years at Kimberley made him familiar with South African conditions, and then he migrated to the gold fields and became a fitter on the East Rand Mines.

A fiery trade unionist, his activities in the 1906 miners' strike made it difficult for him to regain a place in the

mining world, and he abandoned engineering for business and Parliament. His method of playing the game of politics swept the mine workers off their feet. His oratory was prepared on the recipe once disclosed by Dick Seddon of New Zealand: "I believe in giving it to the great many-headed hot and hot, lots of pepper and seasoning, none of your milk and water pap, no namby-pamby solemn beating about the bush, but straight-from-the-shoulder talk."

In the elections for the first Transvaal Parliament Madeley was beaten at Benoni by the late Sir George Farrar, the head of the financial group owning most of the gold mines in the district. When the first Union Parliament came he tried again, and this time succeeded. He defeated Arthur Barlow, and curiously enough 14 years later out-distanced his early rival again in the race for the richer stake of a seat in the Cabinet. Benoni has returned him ever since, with a faithfulness proof against the many disappointments which are the lot of those who back the South African Labour Party, always so full of those

Promises which lapse  
Into some remote It-may-be,  
Into some forlorn Perhaps.

Madeley's political faith is as simple as his own life story. He was, still is, and vows he will continue to be, an advanced Socialist—in theory at any rate. When he has nothing else to say, which is often the case, he falls back upon the blessings of Statisation. He is all for State banking, State shipping, State food control, State bounties, and some patent system of State finance which is to provide the Government with ample capital without the formality of borrowing money and paying interest. He expounds this simple faith on the street corner with incorrigible optimism, a vein of sharp humour, and some facility in the coining of trenchant phrases.

A cheery self-complacency smoothes his path through life. He is one of those happy people who never have any doubts about themselves. Hatless, like Thomas Boydel, with swinging stick and inevitable pipe (the hall-mark nowadays of true democracy) he strides along with that assurance that somebody said is two-thirds of success.

Personally he has always rejected the idea that there is an element of mystery in his progress or his character. He always insisted that the Hon. W. B. Madeley, Minister of Posts & Telegraphs & Public Works, was still the Walter Madeley whose street-corner rhetoric fascinated Benoni for over twenty years. At any rate there was enough of the old Walter left to make his career as a minister short and troubled. The touch of irresponsibility which marked his years as a back-bencher made him an impossible political head of a department. With complete self-assurance he strode from blunder to blunder.

The moment he gained Cabinet rank he repeated in public his profession of faith in Extremism, and, though rebuked by the Nationalist press and warned by his own party leader, he continued to vow that he would not abandon one jot of his political creed. As guarantees of good faith he promptly provided himself, from outside the ranks of the Public Service, with a militant private secretary holding his own political views, gave the staff of his Department permission to take part in trade union conferences, and appointed another Benoni friend to be Welfare Officer for the Post Office employees.

From this starting point he made a sort of political rake's progress. He insisted that unskilled labourers should be paid eight shillings a day, even though they might be Kaffirs, and to the Nationalist farmers in the Pact this was enough, in Canning's words, "to make your blood curdle, your hair



stand on end, and your silver turn black in your pocket." Angry murmurings arose behind the scenes.

In Labour's domestic quarrel he sided with the Left Wing extremists against Creswell and Boydell, his own Cabinet colleagues, which is hardly the sort of thing that smooths the paths of Governments.

In his administration of the Post Office he had an itch for over-riding official recommendations in favour of decisions of his own, and the Department became about as peaceful as an overturned hive of bees. Striding jauntily forward, he devised a wonderful scheme for re-organising the entire Post Office, and the protests of his chief officials only convinced him that he was right. A perturbed Cabinet quashed some of his ideas, but at the end of three years searched for an excuse for parting with the trouble-making Eleventh Minister. One was soon found. Madeley recognised a sort of trade union of natives which his colleagues disliked, and received a deputation from it after the Prime Minister had asked him not to do so. He was asked to resign. As he declined to leave the Government, the Government left him. Hertzog resigned, and formed a new Cabinet an hour later. In it the name of Walter Bayley Madeley was missing. By the middle of November 1928 Madeley was back in Benoni as a humble M.L.A. breathing fire and fury against the Creswell Labourites whom he blamed for his discomfiture.

He is a good speaker, though his style and matter are more suited to the back benches, or the open-air platform, than to a ministerial place. Quick in repartee and fond of witty retorts, he entertains a crowd admirably, and very few of his opponents ever score off him. It is unlikely that he will ever be asked to join another cabinet, though he may continue to play an active and prominent part in politics. His danger is that he may become a Man with a Grievance—the most ineffectual, boring, and futile figure in political life.

### *PART III.*

#### M.L.A.'S AND EX-M.L.A.'S.

#### **The Hon. E. G. JANSEN.**

“And thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.”

On March 4, 1919, Ernest George Jansen sailed for America as a member of the Nationalist delegation going to Europe to demand the secession of the two old Boer Republics from the British Empire.

In 1928 the Hon. Ernest George Jansen, Speaker of the Union House of Assembly, went to America as the leader of the Union delegation to the British Empire Parliamentary Association's visit to Canada.

Those nine years were as momentous in the life of Jansen as they were in the history of South Africa. When they opened he was serving an apprenticeship to racial politics. When they closed he was Speaker in the Union House of Assembly and had built up a reputation in the Chair comparable with any in the Parliamentary records of South Africa.

Ernest George Jansen was born on his father's farm, Strathearn, near Dundee, Natal, on August 7, 1881. Educated at Ladysmith and Durban, he became a teacher, while continuing his studies for the law. Having served his articles with a Maritzburg firm of solicitors, he was called to the Bar. Apart from his legal work, his interest was centred in politics. He was a supporter of the first Botha Government, but gradually became converted to the Hertzogite faith, and was associated with the formation of the small Nationalist Party in Natal. At the 1915 election he contested Umvoti against Colonel Leuchars and Mr. Deane, and was defeated on a split vote by a small margin.

The value of his service to the Nationalist cause was recognised by the party leaders, and in 1919 he was chosen as a member of the deputation which went on the *Barween* to New York, and then to England to ask for the restoration of the two Boer Republics. At the 1921 general election he won the Vryheid seat for the Nationalists by a majority of three votes, and thus became the only Natal Hertzogite in the Union Assembly. His constituency on the borders of the Transvaal once formed part of the old South African Republic and contains many Dutch farmers. He had, too, settled at Vryheid to practise his profession, and his claim for local support was strong.

As a party man in Parliament Jansen was not prominent. The few speeches he made revealed a good voice and a commanding presence, but he did not enter freely into debate.

His big chance came after the 1924 general election, at which he was re-elected for Vryheid by a majority of 176. It was then that the Pact Government came into office.

In the Assembly at that time the Speaker was Joel Krige, who had sat in the Chair for nearly a decade and had won the respect of the House. Krige was a Smuts man in politics; but there had so far been observed in South Africa the English tradition against making a change in the Speakership after a change in the party in power. Sir Christoffel Brand, for instance, had presided over the Old Cape House for 20 years, and Sir David Tennant for 22 years. In the short-lived Transvaal and Free State Parliaments, after 1907, a departure had been made from the English plan, and when a member was chosen Speaker a new member was elected to represent his constituency in the House. The Act of Union did not continue this experiment.

When the Hertzogites came into power, however, they declared that Joel Krige had taken too active a part in

recent politics and declined to reappoint him. They decided to choose the Speaker from their own side. Thus, at the age of 43, Jansen found himself Speaker in the House of Assembly—the age at which Sir James Molteno also became Speaker. Only one younger man had been placed in the Chair in South Africa—Sir Henry Juta, who received the honour when only 38.

Jansen's election maintained the tradition that a lawyer should sit in the Chair. All the Speakers in the Cape and Union Parliaments for 70 years have been lawyers with the solitary exception of Bisset Berry, who arrived in the country as a ship's doctor, settled in the Eastern Province and displayed such a wonderful capacity for presiding at public meetings that he was sent to Parliament and occupied the Chair for a decade.

The party quarrel which marked Jansen's election has not affected his position as Speaker. He has been a marked success in the Chair, and even his political opponents admit that the post has not been better filled.

Delane, the famous editor of *The Times*, was once consulted by the British Government on the appointment of Speaker in the Commons. He laid down the following qualifications as essential:—(1) Imperturbable good temper, tact and patience; (2) a previous legal training, if possible; (3) absence of bitter partisanship in his former career; (4) the possession of innate gentlemanly feelings, which involuntarily command respect and deference; (5) personal dignity in voice and manner.

Jansen possesses these qualifications. He had, it is true, been a strong partisan; but he severed his connection with the Nationalist Party after his election as Speaker.

He had, however, been in Parliament for only three years, and had never been a prominent politician. So, at the time, General Hertzog's choice of Jansen to preside over the

Union Assembly was as much an experiment as was the election of Mr. Gully, K.C., in the House of Commons when he was a very young M.P. who had never spoken in the House and knew little or nothing of procedure. But it was also equally successful. As in the case of Gully so it was with Jansen—appearance, manner and voice were all admirable, and the best traditions of the high post were maintained. A decisive manner, a penetrating voice, quick thinking and prompt utterance gave him at once a powerful grip upon the House. There was no disposition to quibble with the new Speaker.

There have been "scenes" in Committee since 1924, but one cannot recall one in the House when the mace has been on the table and the Speaker in the chair. Jansen holds the scales evenly between Government and Opposition, but he rules with a heavy hand and his standard of conduct and language in Parliament is very strict—some members think a little too strict. J. W. Lowther, who sat in the Commons for 38 years, and was Speaker for 16, left on record the opinion that, if possible, disorder must never be allowed to begin and that sometimes it is necessary for the Speaker to be more severe than others. Jansen acts upon this principle. Further, no suspicion of partiality is found in his control of the House, and he has not hesitated to pull up the Prime Minister and read him a gentle lecture on the limits of expression permissible in parliamentary debate.

His knowledge of precedent and procedure is extensive—even greater than that of Charles Marais, the Speaker in the Orange Free State Assembly, who when one of his rulings was questioned is credited with having burst out indignantly: "I and Erskine May know all about it."

*SIR ERNEST  
OPPENHEIMER, KT.*



## **Sir ERNEST OPPENHEIMER, Kt.**

There are still financial magnates in South Africa, but only one among them gives promise of attaining the highest rank in politics. Sir Ernest Oppenheimer has what most great financiers have not—a natural aptitude, as well as a liking, for politics. He has both the broad outlook and the touch of idealism which are generally essential to success in public life.

It is curious that so few of the men who control vast interests find themselves at ease in Parliaments and Governments. As a rule they prefer to stand in the wings rather than on the political stage. Mark Hanna secured the Presidentship of the United States for McKinley by what somebody described as “a masterpiece of political advertising by the greatest master of that art whom America has yet produced,” but personally he had no inclination towards statesmanship.

Even Rhodes was hardly the exception that proves the rule, for he was always more a statesman than a financier, and preferred the larger role.

Sir Lionel Phillips, one of the gold magnates of the Rand, spent a few years in the House of Assembly, and then wrote that generally he found Parliament “rather futile and wearisome.” He added: “My experience has not been of a kind to produce a successful politician. Most of my life has been spent in the organising of works, the direction of affairs, and the management of men. That involves plainness of speaking, without troubling about diplomatic niceties, without reservations and equivocations.” Sir Abe Bailey dabbled in politics for two decades in the intervals of finance and sport, yet never reached the top of the ladder.



Sir Ernest Oppenheimer has had a dazzling career as a financier, but he has also shown an aptitude for politics which suggests that if he cared to make the effort he could attain to the highest honours:

Born on May 22, 1880, he was only 22 when he settled at Kimberley as the representative of a syndicate firm interested in diamonds. He revealed a remarkable capacity for business, and courage and farsightedness carried him from success to success with unusual rapidity. There is no more difficult trade than that associated with diamonds. Those who control it must have keen vision, the faculty of making prompt decisions, and the faith that can sometimes run heavy risks. There were clever men in the business at Kimberley in the early years after the Anglo-Boer War, but Oppenheimer became recognised as a leader among them, and to-day he is the South African head of the great Diamond Buying Syndicate which practically controls the diamond trade of the world.

It was he who amalgamated all the diamond companies in what was then German South West Africa into one large corporation, thus doing in the now mandated territory what Rhodes did in Kimberley in the early days. More recently his foresight saved the diamond industry from the disaster which was threatened by the immense expansion of the alluvial diggings in the Western Transvaal. Again when the fabulously rich discoveries in Namaqualand proved a disturbing element, his efforts were directed toward the stabilisation which was ultimately secured.

But his diamond interests alone could not employ all his energies. In 1917, with a clear perception of the Union's need of new capital, he succeeded in obtaining the coöperation of leading American financial houses in the exploitation of South African mining resources, and established the Anglo American Corporation of South Africa which has, in

the comparatively short period of eleven years, risen to a high position in the South African mining and financial world. Through the Corporation, Sir Ernest's interests embrace diamonds, gold, coal, copper and land.

Even to-day the public do not fully appreciate the vast work he has undertaken in Northern Rhodesia. In the development of that enormous territory he has put his hand to a task very much resembling that to which Rhodes devoted himself farther South.

Sixteen years ago almost unknown save as an energetic Mayor of Kimberley, Oppenheimer is to-day the biggest financial magnate living in South Africa.

But he has never concentrated upon fortune-making to the exclusion of everything else. From his twenties he has been keenly interested in public affairs. He served a long apprenticeship in municipal life at Kimberley, and it was his energetic policy that did much to aid the town in the years of depression.

It was not until 1924 that he was persuaded to enter the larger sphere of politics and to stand for the Kimberley division as a South African Party man. For the side to which he attached himself, the lean years had begun.

The Smuts Government went to the country after having lost half a dozen by-elections since 1921, and the Pact was boasting that it would utterly destroy it at the polls. There was a landslide towards Hertzog, but Sir Ernest secured the Kimberley seat for Smuts by beating Advocate Kitchin by over 1000 votes, incidentally polling over 400 votes more than the Smuts candidate had done in 1921.

Allotted a seat on the front Opposition bench in the House of Assembly, he quickly justified the honour. He proved an immediate success as a Parliamentarian. Lord Rosebery once wrote that "fascination of manner" is "an invaluable endowment for a politician." Sir Ernest combines a pleasant

manner with the ability to make an excellent speech, and even in his maiden utterance he gained the ear of the House. His voice is good, his style persuasive, and he has the gift of clear explanation.

In the Assembly he specialises on financial and mining subjects, holding that a man should speak about what he knows and not merely for the sake of talking. His contributions to the Budget debates are models of fair criticism backed by the authority that flows from special knowledge and experience. Well read in economics, and a clear thinker, he handles tariff questions ably.

A true South African by adoption, he is free from racial prejudices, and is highly esteemed by the Dutch. While he sometimes criticises the opposite side severely on financial grounds, his speeches are never bitter, and he is one of the most popular men in the House. His success is partly due to the fact that he likes Parliament and politics, and does not merely sit in the Assembly because his large interests find it convenient to have a voice there. Still a young man, as politicians go, he has qualifications which will carry him far if he concentrates sufficiently upon politics. He is the embodiment of that

Good sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,  
And though no science, fairly worth the seven,

and which can carry a man further in public life than wayward genius. While he is known to the public as a financial magnate, he is not without idealism. In the concluding remarks of a speech at Kimberley in 1928 he said:

"I am generally considered to be a practical man, but as a matter of fact I am also a bit of a dreamer, and the dream that is always with me is of the day when South Africa will become a truly great country, and that I shall have been privileged to take some small part in achieving that greatness."

In that modest confession there is revealed the spirit which differentiates the statesman from the politician. If Sir Ernest Oppenheimer can keep that spark of idealism alive, he can go far in political life.



## The Hon. C. J. KRIGE.

The Hon. Joel Krige, who has a place on the Opposition front bench in the House of Assembly, has had an unusual experience in the records of Parliaments. He sat for years as Speaker, and then returned to the elected Chamber as a private member.

Only once in all the centuries of House of Commons history has there been broken the unwritten law which declares that a man who has held the office of Speaker shall not again become an ordinary member. George III. took Addington from the Speaker's Chair and made him Prime Minister. After three years he returned to the House as a private member; but the general sense of the Commons was so much against his presence that he begged for, and obtained, transfer to the Lords, under the title of Lord Sidmouth.

In England nowadays, of course, an ex-Speaker receives a Peerage and a handsome pension. In South Africa no provision is made for the man who leaves the Chair, but in practice he rarely returns to ordinary political life. Sir Henry Juta, who was Speaker of the old Cape House for three sessions and was defeated at a by-election, subsequently found another seat and went back to Parliament for a few years until made Judge-President of the Cape Province. That, however, is the only South African precedent for Krige's translation from the Chair to the ordinary benches in 1924.

It was after nine years of the Speakership that Krige went back to a seat on the floor of the Assembly. He took up active political life again, and, what is more, he did it successfully, which is no easy task. The years spent as

Speaker are a handicap rather than a help to a politician. They mean a lengthy exclusion from the party side of Parliamentary affairs, and the rough and tumble of debate. Occupancy of the Chair, too, is apt to develop that "slightly didactic tone" which somebody noticed in the utterances of Lord Courtney after his long Chairmanship of Committees in the Commons. And Parliaments resent that in ordinary private members.

The aloofness of the Chair also shuts its occupant out from the personal side of parliamentary life in lobby, and committee, and tea-room, which counts for much in establishing the position of the average member. It is more difficult for an ex-Speaker to return to the House than it would be for an ex-Judge to practice at the Bar. Still, Joel Krige is overcoming the drawback of his former greatness. He is losing the tone of infallibility which all Speakers necessarily acquire. He is becoming humanised again.

Christman Joel Krige is one of those staunch party men who never startle the public, never give a Whip an uneasy moment, and never spoil the slumbers of a Prime Minister. Birth, upbringing, and temperament alike combine to make him a twentieth-century successor of one of those solid Cape worthies who for generations had a steady influence on South African life. He has advanced, of course, beyond the farthest point they reached; but not so far that he could not get back to it with ease should necessity arise. Even in his appearance there is something of the solidity, the weight, and the conservatism of the Western Province farmers.

He is 100 per cent. South African. His ancestors were French Huguenots, and his great-grandmother a sister of the redoubtable Piet Retief. By marriage he is related to the family of the late Jan Hofmeyr, and also to Mr. Tielman Roos. He was born at Stellenbosch on March 3, 1868. His father represented the district in the Cape Parliament for

20 years, and he grew up in the political atmosphere of the Afrikander Bond.

He entered upon the legal career to which so many sons of the farm in South Africa devote themselves, and settled down as an attorney in the country town of Caledon, and in some mysterious way was deported in the Anglo-Boer War, and in after years he mentioned that he was sent away without trial, and that the experience cost him £2,000. Though not a brilliant legal orator, he was plainly a sound, hard-headed and reliable lawyer, and he rapidly won the confidence and esteem of the district. Soon he began to play a part in local public affairs, became Mayor, and so paved the way to Parliament, which he entered when the Union was formed in 1910 as one of Botha's men. His abilities won early recognition. He was elected Chief Whip of the South African Party, and in 1911 was one of the representatives of the Union at the coronation of King George in London.

In 1915 Sir James Molteno retired from the Speakership of the Union Assembly, and Krige was chosen to fill the vacancy. He was proposed by the Prime Minister and seconded by the leader of the Unionist Opposition, which in itself bore testimony to the position he had won in Parliament in a brief five years. Hertzog, who led 27 Nationalists in the House, nominated C. T. M. Wilcocks, now Administrator of the Free State, but did so only to deliver a little homily in which he expressed the fear that Krige would not be sympathetic to all parties. After that interlude opposition was withdrawn, and at the age of 47 Joel Krige found himself the second Speaker of the Union Parliament.

The task upon which he entered had been rendered difficult by the excitement and ill-feeling of the two preceding years of industrial unrest, which had adversely



affected the amenities of Parliamentary life. In the previous session the late Speaker, Sir J. T. Molteno, had been bitterly attacked by Charles Fichardt and the Labour Members. A resolution to reduce his salary by £1,000 had been moved in Committee of Supply. Molteno was specifically charged with an "entire lack of interest in the House, and in the comfort of its members," with "a wonderful knack of failing to see members who wanted to speak," with "deliberate rudeness" to members, with "partiality," and with an "inadequate knowledge of Dutch." No doubt, much of this criticism was inspired by the angry scenes of the 1914 session, but there was a general feeling in the House that the time had come when the duties of Speaker should be carried out with more energy.

Krige discharged his difficult task with success. The atmosphere was still not conducive to quiet debates. The heat engendered by the Rebellion and the Great War had hardly begun to die away when the Red Revolt of 1922 once more stirred up angry passions even in Parliament. In all his nine years in the Chair, he did not experience one normal session; but on the whole he gave satisfaction. When he was elected, John X. Merriman, who had been in Parliament for forty years, gave him the advice: "Be firm, rule, and stick to your ruling; justify the rules of the House." He always remembered it.

If on occasions the new Speaker did not allow much latitude, he only acted on the sound principle laid down in the Commons that it is better at times to be more strict than at others, rather than allow dissension to develop into riot. When he ruled the Assembly with an iron hand, he did it for the Assembly's good. And though there were "scenes" in those heated days, and obstruction, and all-night sittings, there was never anything approaching the free fight which disgraced the English Commons in 1893.

Krige had the natural attributes essential to a successful Speakership—a powerful voice, a commanding presence, a masterful manner, and decisive methods. Like the great English judge, Jessel, he could say: “I may be wrong and sometimes am; but I have never any doubts.”

He maintained the dignity of the Assembly. There were critics who charged him with undue severity towards the opponents of his own party. But the testimony borne by all sides to his impartiality when he retired was whole-hearted; and in 1921, Arthur Barlow, a Labour member, wrote an article describing him as “the essence of fairness” and “one of the great Speakers of the British Empire.” Barlow added that “it is hoped by all parties that he will continue to remain in the high and honourable office which he now occupies.”

In April 1924 the leaders of the Nationalists and the Labourites warmly praised Krige’s conduct in the chair. Three months later, when, as a result of the general election, they returned to the House as the Pact Government, they promptly turned him out of it. Perhaps it was because he had successfully repulsed an attack made upon his constituency by “Willie” Beyers, who became Minister of Mines in the new Cabinet.

For something like seventy years South African Parliaments had adhered to the English tradition that a change in the party should not involve a change in the Speakership. Only once in the last century and a quarter has the Speaker in England been refused re-election for party reasons—the occasion upon which, in the thirties of last century, the Whigs declined to re-elect Manners Sutton, alleging that he had taken sides in the Reform Bill conflict. However, the Pact put E. G. Jansen in the Chair; and Joel Krige found a place on the Opposition front bench and began political life over again as a private member.

He sits there to-day as a typical representative of the older element in the Cape Dutch, cautiously progressive, but fiercely opposed to anything savouring of Bolshevism—for Moscow is a bogey which is apt to keep him awake o' nights. He is the champion of the wine farmer, and the wheat grower, and the fisherman, and of all the old Cape life which is threatened by new-fangled industrialism.

A good speaker in both official languages, though with rather a staccato style, he still bears some traces of the manner of the Chair,

As who should say, I am Sir Oracle,  
And, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark !

With booming voice and minatory forefinger he wages unceasing war against the factions of disruption and Socialism. No quarter is given or asked when Joel Krige does battle in bulldog fashion with his political foes. Of staunch party men he is the staunchest. He is constitutionally incapable of doubting the wisdom of his own side, and his faith in himself is profound. With him there is no fraternising with the enemy and no intriguing with would-be Adullamites.

## **Col. Sir DAVID HARRIS, K.C.M.G.**

Mere length of service gives some men an acknowledged place in Parliament. They may not be great speakers, or recognised as forces which count for much in the world of politics, and yet they advance far beyond the status of the back-benchers around them. Thirty years or more in Parliament Buildings stamps a man with this special hallmark. Few in South Africa attain to it, but high among them stands Sir David Harris, one of the oldest and most popular members of the Union Assembly. He has become, as it were, part of the House, and though neither a fierce party man nor a politician whose course would upset governments, he always obtains the ear of an audience notoriously rather difficult to please. Transparent sincerity, a broad mind and a large measure of good nature have given him a position such as few ordinary members can hope to reach.

David Harris is an outstanding example to the younger generation of the value of optimism. He began life as an optimist; and the possession of a racing stable to-day shows that long experience has not changed his outlook.

Born in London on July 12, 1852, he was only nineteen when he decided to go out into the world and make a fortune. The diamond fields in South Africa were then attracting adventurous men, and the ambitious young Jew resolved to give them a trial. A youthful fellow-passenger on the voyage out was one Julius Wernher, who also became one of the financial magnates of Kimberley and the Rand.

Harris's ship, after a thirty-five days' voyage, reached Table Bay on a Saturday night, and when a little boat rowed out to take the mails ashore he asked the men in it how things were on the diamond fields.

"Oh, the diamond fields!" was the scornful reply. "They're played out, they are. Thousands of people are leaving them."

It was a bad blow for an optimist of 19, but it did not destroy his confidence. He went on by sea to Durban, then a mere village half buried in the sand, and from there walked to Kimberley. Men walked to fortune in those days. A few years later there tramped about Natal a young man named Arnott, who forty years afterwards as General Arnott sat behind Harris in the Union House of Assembly.

The country through which Harris passed in the early seventies was calculated to chill him. The farms seemed poverty-stricken, and many of the children wore only skins for clothing. When he finished his 600 miles' tramp the outlook appeared no better. The diggers had got through the "yellow stuff" on the surface and come to the hard "blue ground," and they fancied it meant the end of diamond finding. There was a rush to sell claims at sacrifice prices, and young Harris bought one. The next day he went out with two natives and a pick and shovel to start digging on his property. He found a 38 carat stone which sold for more than he had paid for the claim. The foundation of the fortune had been laid. Optimism had not failed David Harris.

A serious-minded, studious and hard-working youth, he gradually made his way in the diamond business. Before he was 21 he had struck up an acquaintance with Rhodes. Better still, he had impressed the Colossus, and when the great amalgamations were made Harris was included in the De Beers forces, and has been associated with the control at Kimberley ever since.

Outside business he developed a marked taste for soldiering. In 1876 he became a second lieutenant in the Du Toit's Pan Horse, and a year later took part as a volunteer in the

Gaika-Gcaleka campaign, in which he rose to the rank of adjutant and was mentioned in despatches "for highly distinguished conduct and gallantry." He was in the force that marched to the relief of Griquatown, besieged by the natives. He led a column of 500 men in the expedition that quelled the Bechuanaland rising of 1896. He commanded the town guard during the siege of Kimberley in 1899, in which he lost 17 lb. in weight and was described by a pro-Boer paper as a "cattle thief." For many years he was the heart and soul of the volunteer movement on the diamond fields and ended up as Lieutenant-Colonel in command of the Griqualand West Brigade, which was formed largely through his exertions.

It was with reluctance that he abandoned the military field for politics. Rhodes asked him to take Barney Barnato's place in the old Cape Parliament, and so in 1897 he found himself in the House, and, continuing in it after Union, held a seat for over thirty years. Mainly he has been an independent in politics. Frankly he sat in Parliaments to watch over the interests of the diamond industry, and he confined his speeches mainly to subjects directly or indirectly affecting it. He was in Parliament over twenty years before he donned a party label. It was only when Smuts made his appeal to all true South Africans to join the enlarged South African Party that he consented to march under a party banner. "There could," he said, "be no alternative to one who loves South Africa."

In Parliament, apart from the concerns of the diamond business, he gave some attention to finance. In the famous 1899 session of the Cape House he led the Opposition to Merriman's Land and Income Tax Bill, which was carried in the Assembly but defeated in the Upper House. He revealed a thorough grasp of conservative economics, and his views carried weight as being those of a shrewd and

practical man of business. He put up a stiff fight for the more generous recognition of the volunteer forces. It was his intention to retire from politics at the 1924 general election, but a telegram from Smuts contained the appeal: "I simply cannot afford to lose your service in Parliament in the difficult times ahead . . . . I wish to enter the conflict in your veteran company." And Harris though 72 determined to endure the strain of yet one more Parliament.

Naturally his path in politics is smooth now. He wins the respect of the veteran. But apart from that his relations with his political foes are friendly, and only Socialistic Labour, casting greedy eyes at the diamond mines, stirs anything approaching enmity in his breast. His personal popularity is immense. Only once has he had to fight an election, and then his opponent was a mere "also ran." A good speaker on his special subjects, he always gains the ear of Parliament, which likes to hear men who talk with authority on the subject under debate. Had he concentrated upon politics he might have gone far. But they are to him rather a side-line. The diamond business comes first, and for many years soldiering came second.

In so crowded a life he could give little time to the finer points of politics, and so though he is one of the best known and most popular figures in Parliament he does not rank as a front bench politician, and has, indeed, no ambitions in that direction. A Conservative by temperament, he looks doubtfully upon modern tendencies, and his thoughts go back regretfully to the good old days.

"Posterity will be punished for being too democratic," he cries warningly.

## Sir DRUMMOND CHAPLIN, K.C.M.G.

Manner counts in modern politics more than it did when there was a restricted franchise and public meetings were unknown.

Leadership in a democratic State demands the ability to touch the heart as well as the head of a people—to be kind to little prejudices, while enunciating great principles.

Inability to do what Rosebery called "the Tom, Dick and Harry business" is a handicap scarcely to be overcome by the most brilliant parts. Curzon never lived down Spring Rice's lines of his Oxford days:

My name is George Nathaniel Curzon,  
I am a most superior person,  
My cheek is pink, my hair is sleek,  
I dine at Blenheim once a week.

not because of the cleverness of the description, but because it contained the truth that his manner did not make a popular appeal. Nowadays manner maketh the politician more often than not, and the frigidness and aloofness of Sir Robert Peel would have made him an impossible leader in a democratic country. Stanley Baldwin owes some of his popularity to the happy accident which sent him before the public eye smoking a pipe instead of a cigar.

Despite his many good qualities, Sir Drummond Chaplin has never occupied a really prominent place in South African politics. Two obstacles barred his progress. He was endowed with the Curzon manner. And politics were made too easy for him.

From the day he entered the Transvaal Parliament over twenty years ago, he has never sat anywhere save on the front bench. And he imposed upon himself one further handi-



cap. For nine years he exiled himself from the public life of the Union; and in politics such a break is difficult to bridge. He spent them too, in holding a Governorship, which does not develop the qualities necessary for Parliamentary politics.

But probably Drummond Chaplin never desired to be a successful party politician. He has enjoyed a life of varied and notable achievement without reaching that height—or depth.

Francis Drummond Percy Chaplin was born at Twickenham, London, on August 10, 1866. The son of Major Percy Chaplin of the 60th Rifles, he is related on his mother's side to the explorer Franklin. After a distinguished career at Oxford he was called to the Bar at the age of twenty-five, and a year later migrated to South Africa with the intention of practising in Rhodesia, then just emerging from its roughest pioneer days.

Landing at the Cape he found that the native rebellion in the North had begun, and he had to alter his plans. He turned his steps to Johannesburg, and there acted as the correspondent of the *London Times* in succession to Francis Younghusband. The Republic was seething with the excitement and irritation that followed the Raid and finally bred war. He, however, left South Africa before the crash came, and was the correspondent of the *Morning Post* at St. Petersburg, a position which enabled him to travel extensively in the Near East.

In 1900 his journalistic career was closed by the offer of the joint managership of the Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa Ltd., and once more he found himself on the Rand. Those were the hurried days of industrial and governmental reconstruction, but despite the pressure of his mining house work he made time to serve on Milner's nominated Johannesburg Town Council. The grant of Responsible Government

gave the Transvaal a Parliament, and he sat in it for Germiston West, which constituency also sent him to the first Union Parliament.

A defender of Chinese Labour, and interested chiefly in mining and finance, he was regarded as a typical representative of capitalism, but his political ideas were more advanced than most people believed. He was in favour of shorter working hours, better housing accommodation, and a bold forward policy in free education. His speeches were excellent in matter; but he lacked the faculty of appealing to the crowd, and so made little advance in popular politics.

Sir Starr Jameson formed a very high opinion of his capacity, and on giving up the leadership of his party to devote himself to Rhodesian affairs, he asked Chaplin to take over the Administratorship of Southern Rhodesia. For the next nine years Chaplin's work lay in the far North. It was, indeed, a task which suited his temperament admirably. The highly centralised administration was not dependent upon the popular vote. A man had room to move round and apply some of his own ideas. There was not in the air that growing note of aggressive and rather exclusive South African nationalism which farther south was becoming repugnant to the robust imperialism of the Milner period. A strong British sentiment permeated Rhodesia, and in it Chaplin thrived and expanded.

He soon proved himself to be an able administrator. The heavy recruiting in a small white community marooned amid an ocean of blacks, increased the strain of Great War period, in which the economic difficulties would in any case have been considerable. Chaplin carried on with marked success. He negotiated arrangements for disposing of the country's maize and cattle, and so eased the position considerably. Ultimately he added the post of Administrator of Northern Rhodesia to his responsibilities, and held the dual position

with credit until the Chartered Company came to an end in 1923, and Southern Rhodesia set up a Government and a Legislature of its own.

Leaving Rhodesia at the age of fifty-seven, Drummond Chaplin, with some twenty-three years of strenuous work in Southern Africa behind him, might well have assumed the position of unattached observer and critic—become, indeed, what somebody termed “a male dowager.” But the magnet of politics rarely loses all its power. Settling down in the Cape Peninsula, he re-entered the party fold, and in 1924 he went back into the Union Assembly as the member for South Peninsula.

Ten years filled with momentous events had slipped away since he left the House, but he picked up the thread of affairs and became a pungent critic of the new Nationalist-Labour Government he found in power. But Chaplin never became anything more than a critic. Good party man though he is, he fell again into the curiously isolated position he occupied a decade before. He is in party politics, yet not of it. Ex-Governors and ex-officials alike rarely triumph in Parliamentary life. They have lived too long in a different atmosphere. Like Sir Richard Temple, who abandoned a distinguished Indian Civil Service career to pursue the will o’ the wisp Parliamentary success, they labour in vain.

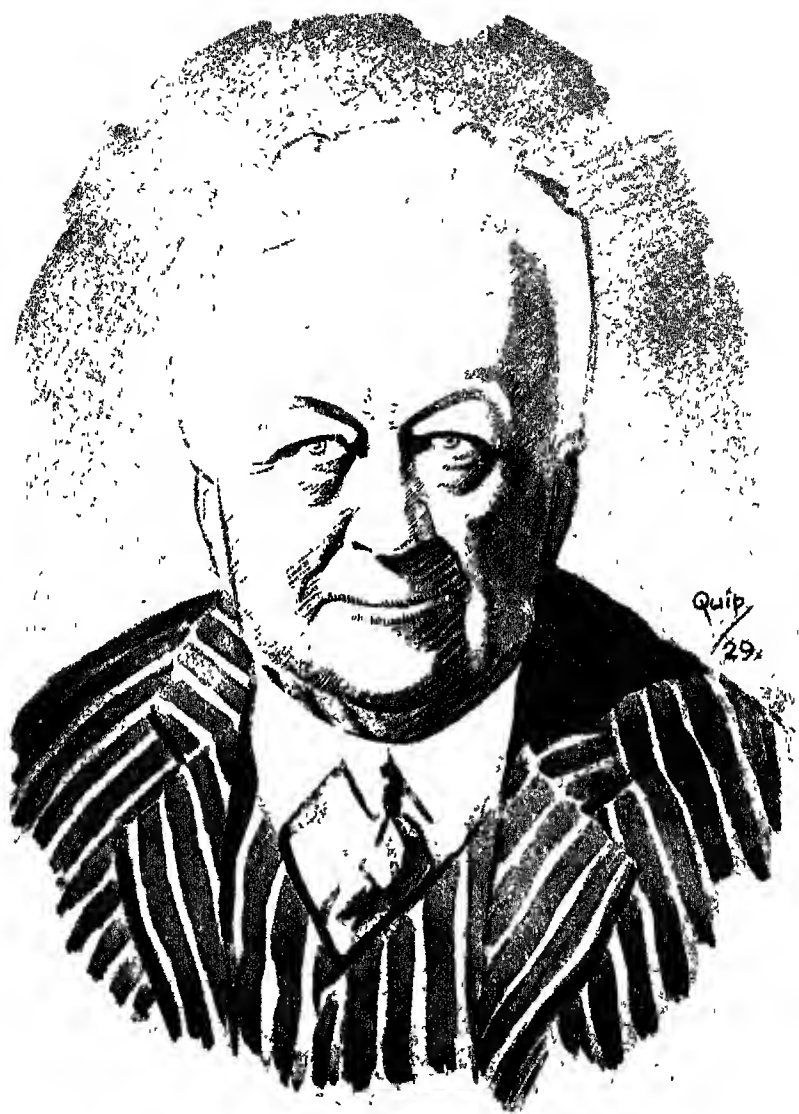
Drummond Chaplin is a cultured and practised speaker who prepares his case with care and states it clearly. He marches relentlessly, though coldly, from point to point, and is never guilty of rambling or repetition. But his delivery is a chilly monotone, and never fills his audience with enthusiasm. His speeches read well; and Charles Fox said that a speech that reads well must be bad. A coldness of manner, a suspicion of vice-regal infallibility, a faint touch of the professor, do not weaken the appeal of his speeches in the study, but they severely restrict their influence in the House

and on the platform. He is apt to tell the public that everybody cannot expect to have a comfortable wage and a comfortable position; which may be economically true, but is politically inexpedient in a democratic country.

In everything he is absolutely direct and honest. If he cannot, or will not, do a thing, he says so without hesitation. Conservative by training and temperament, he looks with regret upon the vanishing of older methods and manners. Politics in the late Victorian period would have suited him best. Disraeli declared that Sir Robert Peel's chief weakness was deficiency "in the knowledge of human nature" and added that "the prosperous routine of his youth was not favourable to the development of this faculty." Chaplin's political journeying has always been of the Pullman kind. Closer experience of the rough and tumble of public life might have endowed him with the knack of appealing to people in the mass. Training and temperament have debarred him from popular leadership. His views are sound, particularly upon economics and finance, but they are too frigid to appeal to the mass, and though he has lived many years in South Africa he rarely gets at the back of the South African mind. After all the astute politician is born and not made. Drummond Chaplin was born a Conservative, and, what is still a greater handicap in South African politics, an English Conservative. He should be in the House of Lords.



*SIR ABE BAILEY, BT.*



## **Sir ABE BAILEY, Bt.**

In prophecy the receiving of a mantle may be an asset; in politics it is more often a handicap. Rarely does the inherited garment fit the new wearer with that perfection which the public expect. There have been many Elijahs in the world of politics, but very few Elishas.

When Cecil John Rhodes died, Abe Bailey sat in his Barkly West seat in the Cape Parliament and some people thought that Rhodes's mantle had fallen with the constituency. Possibly Bailey thought so too. He had been a friend and admirer of the Colossus, and had something of his temperament and outlook upon life. He also was a millionaire, and a man of some vision. It seemed reasonable to assume that the mantle had fallen upon his shoulders, and that he could wear it. But it did not fall to his lot to become Rhodes II.

Perhaps it was that his interests were too numerous. Few South Africans have succeeded in so many activities. But this diffusion of energy did not leave him enough time for the art of mantle wearing.

Born at Cradock in the Cape Colony on November 6, 1864, he was the son of "Tom" Bailey, a well-known storekeeper of Queenstown, who sat for a time in the old Cape Parliament. He was educated in Yorkshire, and for a brief period was in a business office in London. Returning to South Africa he left Queenstown to join in the rush to the Barberton goldfield, and set himself to the task of making a fortune. He was nicknamed "the plodding boy" at Barberton, but he plodded to some purpose. The gold discoveries on the Rand gave him his first big chance. The cosmopolitan financial pioneers of Johannesburg's early days were full of guile and had their



own standards—which were sometimes peculiar. The youthful Bailey pitted his brains against theirs and often came off best. He developed into a mineowner, a landowner on a vast scale, and a successful speculator. Some of those engaged upon similar tasks disliked him. But he merely did unto others what they were trying to do to him—and he did it first.

The Outlander grievances on the Rand made him a politician. Friendship with Rhodes broadened his outlook. He began to flit across the pages of political history. Ian Colvin in his *Life of Jameson* mentions that among the frequent visitors to Rhodes's house at Groote Schuur was "Abe Bailey, to be rallied for his depredations on the widow and the fatherless." With Rhodes he called upon W. T. Stead in London, and the great publicist recorded his impressions of Bailey thus: "A very straight man. Straight in face, and I should say, in character. His conversation was more interesting than that of anybody else, not even excepting Mr. Rhodes, who had not so much new to say."

But if when Rhodes died his mantle did indeed fall upon Abe Bailey, it hung too loosely on his shoulders. In finance Bailey had always played a lone hand, and he was inclined to do the same in politics. By temperament he was not a good party man. He developed that spirit of independence which Rosebery described as "at once the choicest and the least serviceable of all qualities in political life." Rhodes, of course, turned that disability into an asset, but Bailey never managed to do so. Perhaps it was that he did not know, as well as Rhodes did, exactly what he wanted. Politically he always seemed on the very threshold of some notable achievement; but he never got beyond the threshold.

He was a Unionist to begin with, and sometimes in after years he perceived Smuts to be the Necessary Man. But he was apt to fall out of step at awkward moments. He had ideas of his own, and, what was worse, insisted upon pro-

claiming them. He wanted a law compelling the gold mines to employ more whites, and he was ready to "cut the painter" rather than allow the British Government to over-ride the Transvaal on the Indian controversy. When he wore a party label he was prone to place "Independent" before it; and there is nothing political managers dislike quite so much as independence.

Perhaps the real trouble was that he did not concentrate sufficiently upon politics. His interests were too far-flung. He was a good cricketer, a rather more than useful boxer, a crack shot, a racehorse owner, a soldier in several campaigns. He developed, too, an interest in English politics, and was apt to spend half the year in Great Britain.

But politics is a jealous mistress demanding undivided attention. So with all his advantages Bailey held rather a nebulous position in South African public life.

A good speaker with a sense of humour and some facility in coining telling phrases, he handled audiences well. But he did not face them often enough to win a personal following—and then those who felt inclined to fall in behind him were never quite sure where he was going.

Personally popular in House and Lobby alike, he had friends in all camps. But if he treated his foes as if they might one day be friends, he was sometimes apt to treat his friends as though they were potential foes. Disposed to find the happy medium in politics in the no man's land between the opposing armies, he was shot at by both sides. Too South African for the ultra-British, he was too British for the extreme Afrikaners. There was no racialism in his composition, and he got on well with the Dutch, though he would not hear of any republican or secessionist heresies.

But his wide range of interests often took him away from party politics for considerable intervals, and gradually he drifted out of the list of probable runners for leadership. He

liked to pull strings behind the scenes both in South Africa and in England, and often did so; but politically he began to count less with the public, who like their political leaders to be as obvious as the noonday sun. His absences in England lengthened; his appearances on the South African platforms grew more rare.

Gradually he drifted into the position of the chorus in Japanese classical drama, who, suspended midway between ceiling and floor, shout comments when the action grows exciting, and in the end repudiate all responsibility for what they evidently regard as an indifferent performance.

His biennial landings in Cape Town and London are marked by pontifical messages warning all parties of their failings and pointing to the right path as discerned by himself. Party leaders ask for support, and he gives them advice, which is a commodity always at a heavy discount in the sphere of politics.

Save for an occasional encyclical, Sir Abe is out of politics now. His is the rather curious case of a man who seemed to want to be a power in politics, and apparently could have been one, and yet gained almost everything else he desired except that.

All of which proves that a mantle is an over-rated garment in a political wardrobe.

## Mr. LESLIE BLACKWELL, K.C.

In politics as in other phases of life,

The gates of success are ever ajar  
And the temple halls are full,  
For some get in by the door marked "Push"  
And some by the door marked "Pull."

Leslie Blackwell has had no "pull" in the political world. He stepped into it as an unknown young barrister, but something of the "pushfulness" which carried Joseph Chamberlain so far took him into the front rank with unusual rapidity, and when the whirligig of time brings his side into office again he can hardly be denied Cabinet rank.

"We all know he is a very ambitious young man" is the stock taunt hurled at him by the Labourites and Nationalists in the rough and tumble of debate.

The charge goes back some years when Leslie Blackwell declared in the Assembly: "I am prepared as a young man with ambitions to let those ambitions be controlled within the policy of the South African Party." Politicians seize upon such personal touches and never forget them, and Blackwell has heard of his ambitious temperament ever since. Probably he would admit the impeachment as freely as Pitt confessed he was guilty of the atrocious crime of being a young man.

If his chief fault is ambition, his second is a large measure of self-confidence. Lord Melbourne once said that "he wished he was as sure of anything as Tom Macaulay was of everything," and there is a little of the Macaulay temperament in Leslie Blackwell. These two failings—if they are failings—are balanced by a level head, a keen intellect, a broad mind, great determination, and a positive love of hard work. Such qualities have a way of producing results, and Blackwell, who

is still a young man as years are measured in politics, will probably realise most of his ambitions whatever his critics may say.

Leslie Blackwell was born in Sydney, Australia, on February 27, 1885, but he came to South Africa at the age of 10, and is a South African by adoption and long residence. The son of a well-known Johannesburg accountant, he was educated at Jeppe High School and at the South African College, Cape Town. He was a serious and hard-working student who took a keener interest in public affairs than did the majority of the lads of his age. When only eighteen and still a student at college he was chosen as a member of an election committee in a Cape Legislative Council contest. In due time he passed his law examinations and in 1908 set up in practice as a barrister in Johannesburg. But he still made politics his hobby, despite Daniel Webster's warning in his old age: "I have given my life to law and politics. Law is uncertain, and politics are utterly vain."

From these early days his political faith has always been constant. His sympathies from the outset were with the Unionist Party, and when it merged with the South African Party he went forward under the new name and his loyalty to it has never wavered. His real keenness in politics was revealed in the fact that on several occasions he accepted the thankless role of unofficial election agent. It was in this capacity that, in 1910, he entered his present constituency of Bezuidenhout Valley on behalf of Richard Feetham, and though his candidate was beaten he gained a knowledge of the district that proved useful five years later.

Though recognised as one of the most promising young men in the Unionist ranks, Leslie Blackwell was too busy building up his legal career to regard politics as more than a relaxation. So when pressed to stand as a candidate he chose to lead forlorn hopes in which success seemed im-

possible. In this spirit he allowed himself to be nominated for Vrededorp in the Provincial Council elections of 1914. It was an impossible adventure from the outset. The industrial troubles of 1913 and the deportations of January 1914, had caused a strong reaction in favour of Labour. Vrededorp was influenced not only by this, but also by the growing strength of Hertzogism. When the result of the election was announced Blackwell was at the bottom of the poll.

In 1915 there came a general election and he was asked to stand for Parliament in the Unionist cause. The political position had altered by that time. The Great War was raging and the Labour reaction of the previous year had spent its force. He was offered the choice of Jeppe, Benoni and Bezuidenhout Valley constituencies. Again there was a clash between his professional interests and his love of politics; and he sought to effect a compromise by selecting a division in which defeat seemed assured. Accordingly he chose Bezuidenhout Valley, held by the redoubtable Colonel Creswell, Parliamentary leader of the Labour Party. The Unionist attack on the constituency was so lightly regarded that Colonel Creswell decided to contest Kimberley as well. Between two stools he came to the ground. In Bezuidenhout Blackwell, who despite his earlier reluctance fought a particularly strenuous fight, gained a notable and unexpected victory by 13 votes, and so found himself a member of Parliament at the age of 30. He has sat for Bezuidenhout ever since, save for a period of 10 months. In the 1920 election, when the high cost of living had caused dissatisfaction, he was beaten by Major McIntyre, a Labourite, but in 1921 he regained the seat. His successes have been the more remarkable because he has never concealed the fact that he is a prohibitionist, and has thus always roused the hostility of "the Trade."

But in 1915 there were at stake issues more important than politics, and Blackwell had to postpone his Parliamentary activities for several years. He entered the war in German East Africa as a lieutenant in the Motor Cycle Corps and finished up as the Commanding Officer of the South African Motor Dispatch Riders Company, was twice mentioned in dispatches and won the Military Cross; and later in the Great War he joined up in Europe, where he was at the time of the Armistice. Only in the intervals of military activity could he appear in the Union House of Assembly, but the impression he made was distinctly favourable. In one of these fleeting visits he gave the House a mild surprise. J. H. de Waal moved a resolution in favour of Afrikaans being made one of the official languages of the Union. He spoke in English, and Blackwell returned the compliment by supporting him in Afrikaans, much to the delight of the Dutch members.

It was in the 1919 session that Blackwell began to come to the front as a Parliamentarian. He spoke in the Budget debate, and John X. Merriman, the Father of the House, made a most appreciative allusion to his effort and declared that "nothing would help a young member who wanted to get on more than careful attention to the finances of the country." The approbation of the old statesman, who was beginning to look with suspicion upon the new generation, was not readily given, and Blackwell must have thoroughly deserved it. Nor was the advice it contained neglected. Blackwell did pay "careful attention to the finances of the country." He has served for ten years on the Public Accounts Committee and has developed into one of the recognised financial authorities in the House. But his Parliamentary activities were far flung. A keen student of all industrial legislation, he played a useful part in moulding the measures dealing with the gold mining industry and

with miners' phthisis. He was one of the earliest advocates of old age pensions, and fought consistently for woman's suffrage.

A strong temperance advocate, he has always recognised that from a legislative point of view the half-loaf is better than no bread, and has striven for reform rather than absolute prohibition. It was in this spirit that he concentrated upon the great consolidating Liquor Bill of 1928, the discussion of which broke all the long-distance records in South African legislation. The big fight he made to place on the Statute Book a real measure of reform, and the grasp he revealed of every detail of a gigantic and complicated Bill, added greatly to his reputation in the House. Indeed, his work on the Liquor Bill stands out as his best in Parliament so far. It gave a real test of capacity for public affairs.

A born fighter, Leslie Blackwell is one of the most effective critics on the Opposition side. A legal training and a quick mind, strengthened by a painstaking study of public affairs, make him a formidable opponent. Without being an orator, he is a forceful speaker with the faculty of clear exposition. He makes those practical, well-informed, businesslike speeches which in all Parliaments have replaced the old, florid eloquence.

His success as a critic of the Government's shortcomings is often proved by the irritation he causes across the floor. The Prime Minister has descended from the clouds in which he so often dwells in order to launch an angry attack on Blackwell. But that is in itself no proof of error. Fawcett, the blind Postmaster-General in England, wrote that "five years' experience in the House has taught me that a member was always right in bringing forward a question when the fact of his bringing it forward caused the Minister concerned to lose his temper."



But Blackwell bears no ill-will, for he is not one of those who carry their political differences into private life. He never disinters old quarrels, for he is more concerned with *the present and the future than with the past*. In this, of course, he lives up to his reputation. "Ambition, like a torrent, ne'er looks back."

## **Mr. R. STUTTAFORD.**

"I sometimes think," once remarked Senator Lodge, "that the business man in politics is too often one who has no business there."

American legislatures may perhaps provide some evidence in support of that dictum, but there is little or none to be found in the history of South African Parliaments. The Union's Legislative Chambers are always well-filled with lawyers, farmers, and professional politicians, and the vast interests of Commerce have as a rule few spokesmen.

Richard Stuttaford is the most representative business man in South African politics, and nobody who has followed his record would assert that he has no business to be there. What Sir Ernest Oppenheimer is to high finance, and J. W. Jagger is to the importers, so is Stuttaford to the ordinary trading community. He understands their needs, and voices their grievances.

The son of the late Mr. S. R. Stuttaford, he was born in Capetown on June 13, 1870, and educated privately in England and France. His father was a successful business man in Capetown.

To-day Richard Stuttaford is "Stuttaford's", one of the greatest retail businesses in the Union, and he has also large interests in other directions. His commercial career filled in his early years. Two decades ago he served for a brief period on the Capetown City Council, but the work made no strong appeal to him, and he turned to Chamber of Commerce ac-

tivities and became President of the Capetown Chamber of Commerce for two years, and then President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of South Africa for another period of two years.

It was not until 1924 that he was persuaded to enter politics. The Smuts Government was plainly going down fighting, and he was asked to try to hold the Newlands constituency for the South African Party. His side did badly at the elections, mainly owing to the wave of depression which had swept across the country, but he won Newlands against an Independent candidate by the substantial majority of 702 votes, and he found himself sitting on the Opposition benches in the House of Assembly, facing the triumphant Pact.

In his "Recollections," Morley thus recorded his first impression of the House of Commons:—"The waste of time, where so much of it goes to what has the singular peculiarity of being neither business nor rest, to one whose years had been industrious and practical, was not far short of heart-breaking, though perhaps after all the House of Commons is by no means the place where one's waste of time is the worst."

If Stuttaford underwent a similar disillusionment after so many years of business life, he kept the fact to himself. He gave time and careful preparation to his Parliamentary duties, and quickly won the reputation of being a useful member.

Politically he is a representative of that school of thought which was once called Tory Democracy. He has the conservative mind, but he stands for progress and social reform, though he holds their attainment must be by evolution and not by revolution. He wants to go forward, but he likes to be sure that his first step is in the right direction before he takes a second. Like Disraeli he could say: "I am a Conser-

vative to preserve all that is good in our Constitution, a Radical to remove all that is bad."

He agrees with Charles Dickens that "the reform of the habitations of the people must precede all other reforms, and that without it all other reforms must fail." As a practical proof of his faith he has done more than try to keep the Government up to the mark in housing policy, for he has taken the lead in private enterprises of the garden city type.

As a practical business man, he wages a ceaseless warfare against those who would set up bureaucratic Socialism and hamper industry by over-inspection. He fought a long duel with Walter Madeley, when Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, over the issue of automatic telephones. Madeley was an obstinate defender of manual labour, and in other days would have marched hatless, and with swinging stick, at the head of the Luddites. The mere spectacle of an automatic telephone drove him to fury, and he declined to install the system in the Post Office, or even permit private firms to use it. Stuttaford bombed the Ministerial dug-out session after session until its angry occupant lapsed into retorts in very bad taste.

But time proved who was right. When Madeley was ejected from a long-suffering Cabinet, his Labour successor promptly agreed with Stuttaford and allowed the automatic system to be installed, not only by private firms, but in Government departments.

Though he makes no claim to be an orator, Richard Stuttaford always gains the ear of the House. Parliaments invariably listen to the man who is an authority on the subject on which he speaks. His speeches are thoroughly practical and full of excellent material, for he studies his topic carefully and his facts and figures can never be questioned. He keeps a watchful eye on those increases in expenditure into which all Government departments fall so

easily, and on economic issues his views are sound. On the colour question he has the traditional broadmindedness of the Cape.

Though by instinct and training a keen business man, his outlook is not narrow. He is an admirable representative of that non-racial and level-headed South Africanism which believes the brightest future for the country will be gained by development within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

## Mr. MORRIS ALEXANDER, K.C.

"There are two united parties in this House, and I am one of them," boasted Tim Healy in one of his witty speeches in the House of Commons.

Morris Alexander could equally well advance a similar claim in the Union House of Assembly. There may be domestic quarrels in the ranks of the Labourites and the Nationalists, but no dissension disturbs the peaceful atmosphere of the caucus of the Constitutional Democrats. Morris Alexander is that caucus. He is the entire party in Parliament, for no other member bearing that particular label has ever been returned to the House. Of the 135 members of the Assembly he is the only one—except, of course, the Speaker—who does not swear allegiance to one or other of the three big parties. He is the Alexander Selkirk of the South African politics, able to declare, what no other party leader can,

*I am monarch of all I survey  
My right there is none to dispute.*

There are times when the leaders of the big parties gaze a little enviously at Morris Alexander. One contingency, only, could cause him some trouble. Suppose he were invited to form a Government——

But Morris Alexander is the sort of man who would take all the eleven portfolios himself.

Born on December 4, 1877, at Znin, Prussia, Morris Alexander has lived practically all his life in the Cape, and owes everything to South Africa. Educated at the South African College, Capetown, and at St. John's College, Cambridge, he revealed in his schooldays that persevering ability which has marked all his career, and won numerous scholastic

distinctions. In June 1900 he was called to the Bar in the Inner Temple, London, and a few months later set up in practice at Capetown.

The Anglo-Boer War was still raging when he entered his modest chambers and waited for the briefs that came but slowly. A wave of depression followed the war, and affected the legal profession, but if he found himself with more spare time than he could have wished, Morris Alexander was not the man to waste it. In his early twenties he was an active worker in the Jewish community at the Cape, and at 28 became a member of the Cape Town City Council. Municipal activities paved the way for Parliament, and when only 31 he entered the Cape House of Assembly as member for the Castle division of the city. The 1908 election saw the Progressive Party, to which Mr. Alexander belonged, badly beaten, and the fact that he managed to hold the Castle for his side bore testimony to the place he had already won in public life.

In 1910, when the Union absorbed the separate colonies, he was returned to the House of Assembly for the same constituency, and he has held it ever since, despite fierce attempts to wrest it from him, and also changes in its area and name which transformed it into the Hanover Street division.

The Old Cape Progressive Party had merged its identity in the Unionist Party, and in his early years in the Union Parliament Alexander ranked as a Unionist, though he can hardly have been regarded as an enthusiastic partisan. When in later years the Unionists amalgamated with General Smuts's South African Party, and became more influenced by the colour ideas of the North, he declined to go with them, and formed the Constitutional Democratic Party, which, though it has always been a poor thing numerically, is at least his own. He staked everything on this change at

the 1924 general election, and announced that the contest meant either the continuance or the termination of his political career. He would, he told the electors of Hanover Street, be returned upon his principles, or be outside politics altogether. In 1921 he had been unopposed, but the South African Party in 1924 put up Mr. I. Purcell against him and made a big effort to win the seat. Alexander, however, triumphed by a majority of 142 votes, and so four years later completed his second decade of unbroken service as a member of Parliament.

In the elected Chamber he has always been the member for the public service, more particularly for the postal and railway workers, whose claims he has urged in season and out of season. On general issues he ranks probably as a Radical, or at least an advanced Liberal.

The foundation of his politics is the principle of no discrimination on the ground of race, religion, or colour. This test he applies relentlessly upon all occasions. Upon this ground he fights the battle of the South-Eastern European, the coloured man, the native, and the Asiatic. Make the test one of a standard of civilisation, and Morris Alexander is with you all the time. Make it one of race, or colour, or creed, and he will perish in the last ditch as a minority of one rather than give way. He has the moral courage to back the unpopular cause. Never has he agreed with Earl Nugent that it is

Safer with multitudes to stray,  
Than tread alone a fairer way :  
To mingle with the erring throng,  
Than boldly speak ten millions wrong.

For he is the acknowledged leader of Lost Causes. He will stand up for aggrieved public servants against the State, for faith-healers against doctors, for dental mechanics against dentists, for conscientious objectors against vaccinationists.



No matter how forlorn the hope, he leads it with all the energy, and the determination, and the painstaking preparation that could be given to the most promising cause. Nothing rouses him to anger more than privileges, ring fences, colour bars, race prejudices, and all obstacles to freedom of action and thought.

The great Lord Salisbury used to say that in politics an independent was a man nobody could depend upon. No party can depend upon Morris Alexander's vote when he thinks it is in the wrong. He may side more often with the Pact Government than with the Opposition, but he is quite prepared to vote against it on the most vital issues if it does not live up to the standard of Constitutional Democracy, which, though a closed book to the ordinary elector, he believes he himself views through the Urim and the Thummim of all honest politicians.

A vigorous speaker in both official languages, he always maintains a high level in debate. Twenty years of conscientious work in Parliaments have given him a wide range of legislative and political knowledge, and a more than usually good grip of procedure—of which the average member of Parliament is strangely ignorant. Aggressive in attack, and skilful in defence, he is always a dangerous opponent in debate, and when roused—and he is inclined to become angry upon little provocation—he deals out hard blows.

Could he have remained a strong party man he would have gone farther in Parliament. In public affairs the solitary actor discovers in the long run that, however admirable his position may be in theory, there is truth in the words of the Preacher of old: "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him."

## Mr. J. S. MARWICK.

Authorities on political tactics agree that every party should have its ginger group.

"Dost thou think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?"

"Yes, by St. Anne, and ginger shall be hot i' the mouth too."

John Sydney Marwick is one of the members of a ginger group in the Opposition in the Union Parliament, and wages a war to the knife against the entire Pact, collectively and individually.

A humble musket bearer in the South African Party ranks, he figures in the reports and sketches of the House of Assembly more often than some of the staff officers on the front bench. Run back through the newspaper files of the last four years and pick out the Parliamentary notices with headlines descriptive of heated questionings and angry scenes and fierce recriminations; and it is all the Rand gold output to a torn tram ticket that you will find Marwick well in the centre of the turmoil. Yet he is not a man of strong political ambition striving to make a place for himself. Behind his aggressiveness there is no plan of personal advancement. Outside politics he is like Cowper's "scrupulous good man":

He would not with a peremptory tone  
Assert the nose upon his face his own.

But in politics he sees red all the time. There burns within him the fire of a fierce partisanship. He reminds one of a passage in Halifax's writings: "The Heat of a Party is like the Burning of a Fever; and not a Natural Warmth evenly

Votes and Proceedings of March 5, 1926. To some it would have been a rebuke. To Marwick it was a stepping stone to success. Living up to Biggar's immortal axiom for obstruction, "Never talk except in Government time," he went calmly on with his campaign of political attrition against the Pact. The enemy groaned when, with a seraphic smile and a bundle of notes, he rose to his feet. Sometimes it fled the House to escape his barbed shafts; for though the Marwickian arrows may seem at first to be a little crudely made, they have a wonderful capacity for hitting soft places very painfully.

But whether the foe stayed and howled, or took refuge in flight, was immaterial to Marwick. Nothing could stop his blowing his blasts on the ram's horns outside the political Jericho he had vowed he would destroy.

Destructive criticism is his strong point in Parliament and on the platform alike. With him it is a gift. He is not an attractive speaker as far as style goes, for he has a rather nervous manner, and speaks in a hesitating monotone, pausing frequently to search for a word. But his matter is far better than his manner, and touches of quiet caustic humour reward the patient listener. "Thorough" is the Marwickian motto in political oratory. The quantity of information he accumulates on any case he takes up, is wonderful. The documents on his desk in the House overflow in all directions, and flood the neighbouring seats with the letters, papers, cuttings and Blue books from which he draws up his formidable indictments.

He is a British and Imperialist South African of a type indigenous to Natal and parts of the Cape Colony. He regards a Nationalist very much as Torquemada looked upon a heretic. To discomfit the combination of all the iniquities known as the Pact is a righteous task upon which he strains every nerve. He is a past-master in the drafting

of inquisitory, or condemnatory, questions. His volley of supplementary inquiries echoes through the House like machine-gun fire.

But he specialises upon a mass attack involving the personal actions and prestige of a Minister. To build up such an offensive he will go without food or sleep. The information he acquires from official, and private, and secret sources astonishes the enemy, and the charges he launches are calculated to make the flesh creep. There is no man in Parliament who can indulge in so much calculated invective and scorching vituperation in so mild and apologetic a manner. His tone is like sugar, but his sentences taste like gall. In politics he is a zealot. And as Swift said: "Zeal is never so highly obliged as when you set it a tearing."



## Mr. A. G. BARLOW.

Cobden once wrote a letter to Goschen condemning the candid critic in Parliament who censures his own side.

"This in the long run," he said, "leads to isolation, in which no man can accomplish any important object, for he loses his influence when absorbing issues are at stake, and passes almost out of view at the decisive struggle of parties. Fire-ships which endanger friend and foe are cast aside when the great contest takes place in close line of battle."

Temperamentally some men are fire-ships and always will be. Humdrum party loyalty soon begins to oppress them. Every now and then they break out and hit the first head they see. Arthur Barlow is of this temper. No one who has not attained Cabinet rank is better known in South African public life. His fire-ship methods have given him a special place in politics and in Parliament, but have denied him a place in power. An aggressive speaker, and one of the acknowledged wits of the Assembly, he empties the tea-room and fills the House on the dullest day. He is an artist in unexpectedness, a politician who helps to make Parliamentary life interesting. As he zig-zags across the sea of politics he keeps others wide awake and attentive. That he reaches no port does not trouble him. The voyage is the thing, not the destination. A Bloemfontein paper once described him as a Daniel. But there is in him more of Ishmael, the son of Hagar—"he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Perhaps, too, he has also a touch of the other Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah.

Arthur George Barlow has crowded much into his fifty years. The second son of the late Arthur Barlow, one of the business magnates of the old Free State, he was educated at St. Andrew's College, Grahamstown. Full of vitality and a rather restless energy, he threw himself into both work and play with wholehearted enthusiasm. He started his business life on *The Friend* newspaper at Bloemfontein, which his father owned, captained the Free State rugby team, and played cricket for the Province. He became editor of the *Friend* and embarked upon various commercial and agricultural enterprises; but the lure of public life ensnared him, and in watching over other people's interests he was apt to neglect his own. He was a town councillor, a Provincial Councillor and a member of the Free State House of Assembly when still in his early thirties. In those days he belonged to the Unionist Party and employed his natural gift of invective in denouncing Hertzog's educational policy—an attitude which was remembered against him in later years.

With the formation of the Union of South Africa, his ambitions expanded. There was small chance for a Unionist in the Free State, so he crossed into the Transvaal and stood for the East Rand constituency of Benoni, where he was beaten by one Walter Bayley Madeley, "fitter," whom he was to encounter again in later years.

The Unionist faith satisfied him at that period, and when the Hertzog schism shook the Government from head to foot, his sympathies, like those of the Unionists generally, were whole-heartedly with Botha. "If General Botha stumps the Free State," he declared, "he will beat General Hertzog to a frazzle." It was an unfortunate prophecy because the reverse actually happened; and before long the seer himself began to move towards the Hertzogite camp.

He first discovered that Unionism was not his true political home, and moved over to Labour, in whose name he tried to wrest the Troyeville division from J. W. Quinn, a Unionist with Independent leanings who had been Chairman of the Transvaal Indigency Commission and might have gone far in politics had he not died when still in the prime of life. Troyeville was not to be captured by Barlowian eloquence, so the convert to Labour shook the dust of the Rand from his feet and returned to Bloemfontein.

In 1920 he was beaten as a Labourite in the northern division of his native town in a three-cornered fight, but in February 1921 in a straight contest with J. W. G. Steyn, the Nationalist victor of the previous year, he won by a majority of 316, and found himself the Free State's only Labour representative in the Union Parliament.

Once in the Assembly Arthur Barlow soon got what Abe Lincoln called "the hang of the House" and strode rapidly out of the ruck of new members. Fluent in both official languages, with an acid wit and the gift of biting repartee, he was recognised as a useful friend and a dangerous enemy. A powerful voice, a strong personality, and a sound knowledge of the rules of the House, raised him to the position of Deputy Chairman of Committees, a post he holds with complete impartiality and marked success. It was he, too, who tabled the famous motion that placed a ban upon titles in South Africa just before the visit of the Prince of Wales, which would in the ordinary way have been followed by a shower of knighthoods.

But, as was said of Canning, Arthur Barlow is "a man just too witty to be wise." He cannot resist saying a smart thing, regardless of the warning that he who makes a jest makes an enemy. And he continues to steer his fire-ship course. He has denounced the Nationalists and praised them; criticised the Labourites and lauded them to the skies;



abused Hertzog and Tielman Roos and greeted them as great leaders; extolled the Pact, and fulminated against Pact men and measures. It is often very amusing, but the steady-going party leaders put down a mental black mark against the name of Arthur George Barlow.

He is unpleasantly quick, too, in detecting the inconsistencies and the flaws on his own side of the House, and that again is not a faculty which commends itself to party managers. Like many keen politicians he delights in mole-like activities behind the scenes, and appears to hold with Dryden that

Plots, true or false, are necessary things,  
To raise up commonwealths and ruin kings.

These efforts are often singularly indiscreet. In the fulness of his heart he has said what he thought of his colleagues in letters, and their subsequent publication have not helped him in his career.

It was the steering of his erratic course that destroyed any chance he had of becoming the Eleventh Minister in the Pact Cabinet. He felt he had claims. He entertained hopes. Unfortunately there was a disappointing lack of enthusiasm and sympathy among those around him, and he faded suddenly and mysteriously out of the picture. For the second time in his life he was defeated by Walter Madeley, upon whom the coveted portfolio was conferred.

It is as a Parliamentarian, rather than as a party man, that Arthur Barlow will go down into South African political history. He loves Parliament, and could, indeed, have dropped softly into more than one position outside it, but has declined everything which would take him out of the House.

He is the recognised Chief Barracker of the Pact. A caustic tongue and some talent in repartee make him the terror of speakers easily thrown out of their stride. He

fight with a bludgeon rather than a rapier, and his retorts are often of *tu quoque* order, but Parliaments are generally jaded and bored assemblies in which a little obvious humour goes a long way.

“Members seem to think they are at the Tivoli,” complained Emile Nathan one day when the House was in a flippant mood. “No wonder, when there’s a clown on the stage,” chimed in Barlow. “I am sorry I can’t give you intelligence,” snapped the much-goaded Marwick at his tormentor. “No, you can’t give away what you haven’t got,” returned the irrepressible Arthur.

These may not be the gems of the collection of Barlowian wit, but they represent the average. If they do not rank with historic retorts, they are serviceable in the rough and tumble of South African Parliamentary debate.

A wonderful memory for the political past of his opponents gives spice to his speeches. If his effort is not always an argument, it is generally an entertainment. He is stronger in attack than in defence, and when his invective becomes unfair he regards the indignation of his victims quite calmly. The chief obstacle to his progress in politics has been himself. Somebody said that

To die for party is a common evil  
But to be hanged for nonsense is the devil.

Politically Barlow has sentenced himself to be hanged for nonsense. Whether he will be able to reprieve himself at this late hour, Time will show.



# INDEX.

	PAGE
ALEXANDER, MORRIS, K.C.	179
BAILEY, SIR ABE, BT.	165
BARLOW, ARTHUR GEORGE	189
BEYERS, HON. F. W., K.C.	43
BLACKWELL, LESLIE, K.C.	169
BOYDELL, HON. THOMAS	67
BURTON, HON. HENRY, K.C.	117
CHAPLIN, SIR DRUMMOND, K.C.M.G.	159
CRESWELL, COL. HON. F. H. P.	29
DE WET, SENATOR HON. N. J.	113
DUNCAN, HON. PATRICK, K.C.	107
GROBLER, HON. P. G. W.	55
HARRIS, COL. SIR DAVID, K.C.M.G.	155
HAVENGA, HON. N. C.	37
HERTZOG, GEN. HON. J. B. M.	1
JAGGER, HON. J. W.	99
JANSEN, HON. E. G.	139
KEMP, GEN. HON. J. C. G.	61
KRIGE, HON. C. J.	149
MADELEY, HON. W. B.	135
MALAN, HON. CHARLES WYNARD	49
MALAN, HON. DANIEL FRANCOIS	21
MALAN, RT. HON. SENATOR F. S., P.C.	93
MARWICK, JOHN SIDNEY	183
OPPENHEIMER, SIR ERNEST, KT.	143
REITZ, COL. HON. DENEYS	129
ROOS, HON. TIELMAN JOE DE V., K.C.	13
SAMPSON, HON. H. W.	73
SMARTT, RT. HON. SIR THOMAS, P.C.	87
SMUTS, GEN. RT. HON. J. C., P.C.	77
STUTTAFORD, RICHARD	175
WATT, HON. SIR THOMAS	123

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